A U M

The Kings of Light have departed in wrath. The sins of men have become so black that earth quivers in her great agony * * The azure seats remain empty. Who of the brown, who of the red, or yet among the black, races, can sit in the seats of the blessed, the seats of knowledge and mercy? Who can assume the flower of power, the plant of the golden stem and the azure blossom?—*Secret Doctrine, vol. 2.*

THEOSOPHY

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THE BHAGAVAD-GITA

CHAPTER X.

BY A STUDENT OF W. Q. J.

THE title given is "Devotion By Means of the Universal Divine Perfections". The words "Universal Divine Perfections" have a significance not usually perceived. Men speak of perfection from the standpoint of imperfection, and always in relation to forms, conditions and appearances that are constantly changing; so that with humanity in general the standard of perfection is an ever-receding and elusive, as well as delusive idea. Here again, as with our modern science, we reason from particulars to universals, instead of from universals to particulars, never perceiving that nothing less than *the cause itself* could ever know *itself*.

The discourses of Krishna but repeat that which was known before, to the perfected men of all ages, and that which all divine incarnations have since declared—that Man is identical with the Absolute unmanifested, and also with the Deity as we see It manifested in Nature. Our doctrines and education lead us to think that we are *inherently imperfect;* if we are so, we can never by any possibility become perfect; but if we are inherently perfect, we can see, understand and correct imperfect knowledge and use of all forces, for it is *forces* we are dealing with, not forms; it is *ideas,* not persons. We will begin to understand that there is but one force or power—the Spiritual, and that all the various effects of that one power or force that we see and experience, are due to the direction given by conscious entities of many kinds in their different degrees. To understand the "divine perfections", they must be applied universally, from the standpoint of the One Self—the Self of each, the Self of All.

While the Gita is laid out in the form of a dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna, as between a divine teacher and his disciple

and may be so understood, it can also be applied in another way; Krishna is the Higher Self in each, and Arjuna, the mind, the mirror of external impressions; so that the dialogue can be profitably taken as a means to the realization of the Self, and Its adjustment and control of the lower elements and forces. The key-note of the ancient teaching is that the creative and sustaining power of all things and beings is not to be sought for externally; it can only be found at the very root of the nature of each and every being. As it is put in the Upanishads, "The Self-Being pierced the openings outward, hence one looks outward, not within himself." The wise, who seek the Eternal, look inward, for "that which lives and thinks in Man is the Eternal Pilgrim" (S. D.) It is necessary then for the student to dwell upon the idea that he acts for and as the Self of All; that the power to see all, and to know all, is potentially present with him, is in fact his real Self. He will at least then understand when Krishna says "Neither the assemblage of the Gods nor the Adept Kings know my origin, because I am the origin of all the Gods and of the Adepts"; "I am the origin of all; all things proceed from me", that he is speaking of the Self of All and of each, and that the origin of that which is Eternal and unchanging is not to be discovered, for it is both Being and Non-Being. As Patanjali states it, "The Soul is the Perceiver; is vision itself, pure and simple, and it looks directly on ideas". This means that each human being has the power to see and know all things, however restricted that power may be at any given time; that the restriction lies in the more or less narrow range of the ideas that he adheres to, and which form the basis for his actions. This self-limited range of perception, not only prevents the full exercise of his powers as Self, but acts as a bar to the right understanding of his observation and experience; so, even the man of today may say, "I am the origin of all things; all things proceed from me", for so far as he is concerned, his adopted ideas and acquired nature form the basis for all causes set in motion by him, and also constitute his field of observation and experience of effects. By the very power that resides in Self, Man creates good and evil, the delusion of separateness, and all imperfections. Divine perfections are universal; they can only be reached by acting for and as the Self in all things. This state can be obtained by a gradual elimination of all bases of action that make for separateness.

Arjuna begins by stating to himself (Krishna), the characteristics that to him designate the very highest place and power. "Thou art Parabrahm" (beyond Brahma); "thou art the Eternal Presence, the Divine Being; all-pervading; without beginning." "Thou alone knowest thyself by thy Self." "Thou alone can fully declare thy divine powers". "How shall I, constantly thinking of thee, be able to know thee." "In what particular forms shall I meditate on thee?"

The reply begins with; "I will make thee acquainted with the chief of my divine manifestations, *for the extent of my nature is*

infinite. I am the Ego which is seated in the hearts of all beings; I am the beginning, the middle and the end of all existing things." He then goes on to recite that among the gods, the Self is the highest; among planetary bodies, the Sun expresses It; among the spirits of the air, the chief of these is an expression of It; among the sacred writings, It is the essence of these—the all-compelling song or sound; and so on through a long list of forms, powers and qualities understood by Arjuna. He concludes by saying, "I am, O Arjuna, the seed of all existing things, and there is not anything, whether animate or inanimate, which is without me". "My divine manifestations are without end, the many which I have mentioned are by way of example. Whatever creature is permanent, of good fortune or mighty, also know it to be sprung from a portion of my energy. But what, O Arjuna, hast thou to do with so much knowledge as this? I established this whole universe with a portion of myself and remain separate."

Arjuna had asked Krishna under what particular form should the Self be worshipped. Krishna's reply was "under all forms", that there is nothing in the universe, animate or inanimate, which is without the Self. The seeker for Truth and knowledge must see the One Self in all things, and all things in the Self, and then act for and as the Self of All. All sacred writings are addressed to the individual, for it is from within the individual, and the individual alone, that reformation can begin and must be consummated. The study and application of the Gita tends to break down all ideas based upon separateness, and impresses upon the student that the way of true knowledge of the divine perfections lies in universal service, without distinction of caste, creed, sex, color or race. "Self knowledge is of loving deeds, the child".

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THOUGHTS IN SOLITUDE*

VIII.

WHAT is known in the present day under the name of Theosophy, as has repeatedly been stated, is the primary truth which all the religions of the world alike have enshrined—it may be regarded as the kernel of which the religions have been the husks, and it would seem that in the development of this idea, and in the comparison of the objects aimed at by the various religions and by Theosophy, that we shall best realize the stupendous scope and importance of this divine hidden wisdom.

While some of the religions may have been more transparent husks than others through which the kernel of the wisdom of the ages might be dimly visioned, in other words, while some may contain vague hints of the wider horizon and the more transcendent

* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for October, 1887. 2

heights of being, it may generally be stated without making invidious distinctions that the religions of the world as a rule have concerned themselves almost exclusively with the present earth life and the life lying immediately beyond. It is with the rewards and punishments of this state in the immediate future, and with the moral or virtuous thoughts and actions of the present life, which are supposed to be the means of meriting the former and of avoiding the latter, that the priesthoods and the teachers of religion have principally dealt. Indeed, so engrossed in the pursuit of worldly objects have the priesthoods of some religions become that the wider horizon has been completely lost by them.

While the quality of spirituality is but feebly developed in mankind, while the occupations and aims of this present earth life continue to absorb so very much the greater part of the energy of men, and while the intellectual development of those who have some dim perception of a higher state has still to achieve its period of blossom, the different religions adopted by the various races of men will continue to supply the required needs. But there are a few in each country who have risen above the prevailing level—the forerunners we take it of the mighty coming race, and their numbers are being daily added to—men of thought and feeling who through pain and inward struggle have emancipated themselves from the deadly bonds of superstition, and who have at the same time been too great hearted to fall into the still deadlier grip of the opposing faction that usurps the name of science, and that parades its little aims under the denial of all that is most sacred in humanity—men who by intense imaginative power have grasped and realized all that this life has to give, and have been forced to put it by as failing to satisfy their highest aspirations. For such men the Theosophic advent has been a true Eirenicon. No longer bounded by the dimly imaged heaven which superstitious ignorance stretched into eternity, all life now lies before the impartial student of nature in logical order. The law of absolute justice under the name of Karma, which follows with impartial reward or retribution every act, every word and every thought, is now recognized alike as satisfying the moral conscience of the religious man, and as extending over the whole horizon of man's nature the inevitable sequence of cause and effect which the scientists have shown to exist in the material world; while in marked contrast alike to the agnostic acceptance of annihilation, and to the diabolic theory of the arbitrary awardment of eternal bliss or eternal misery to the poor struggling mortals, who after a short life-time of 70 or 80 years are surely unlikely to be deserving of either, the picture is completed by the steady progress and evolution of the soul through the continually repeated vicissitudes of earthly life—alternated and relieved by the blissful dreams of heaven where the infinite variety of human character will through æons of time reap in subtle distinction that which is the due of each.

The objects of the Theosophical Society may be stated as twofold. Firstly to act as a counter movement alike to the decaying

but still lingering superstitions, and still more to the rampant and growing materialism of the present day, and the best way to attain this first object is surely to give to the world such a system of thought as may help to explain the mysteries of life. Such a system as will at once satisfy man's logical requirements, his moral feeling of fitness, and his highest spiritual aspirations. And where will such a system be found as in the doctrines Theosophy teaches? The second and main object to which the first leads up, is to act as a guide to the pathway of deliverance by which man may escape from the alternating miseries of birth and death, and attain the one permanent state of Being. This is the great—the divine—secret—to be bound no longer in conditioned existence—to merge the manhood in the Godhead! To catch a glimpse of one of the thousand states of ecstatic being that lie in infinite gradation between us and that stupendous goal would blind us with excess of light. Surely then the only figure before the mind when whispering in worshiping awe of that ineffable state of being should be the kneeling angel with head bent low, and wings crossed before the face.

While a large and increasing number are likely to be influenced by the teachings of Theosophy towards more tolerant and wider views of life, the number of those who will feel impelled to attempt the great undertaking will not probably in this age of darkness be relatively large. But indeed it is not a matter of choice, the destiny of each guides unerringly in the path he is bound to tread, the good within drives and will drive in ways that we know not of. The deep depression or the cutting sorrow of former years may pass away, the torture may take a more subtle form, but while the wings are yet too weak to soar for long in the heavenly air, the detachment from earthly things is bound to bear its first fruits of pain, and the heart will still remain steadily crushed between the upper and the nether millstones. When the aimlessness of this life has made itself felt, to the exclusion of all other thought, to escape from its desolating curse must seem the one object worthy of accomplishment. The converging lines of Karma must doubtless have led those who feel impelled to scale the transcendent heights, compared with which the most soaring ambition of earthly life sinks into nothingness, but in weak-kneed moments to be thrust on such a path of greatness is felt to be a pathetic destiny, a forlorn hope, truly forlorn if the present life alone is regarded, but it is a forlorn hope that *has* to be led.

To realize with vivid distinctness the inanity of all earthly bliss, and yet to catch no refreshing glimpse of the beatific vision; to taste no strengthening sip of the heavenly Amrit, this is indeed a desolateness without any parallel in worldly life, it is the "indescribable vacuum" of the heart, so well pictured in an article in the June *Theosophist* entitled "Divine Heartache." But as the writer there goes on to describe in words which recall St. John of the Cross's "Obscure Night of the Soul" the apparent contraction of the heart is caused by the divine fire which is driving out its rheum and filthy moisture, and is but a prelude to the ultimate expansion.

St. Thomas à Kempis, also dwells on the trouble of mind the disciple must learn to bear, and points out that "to be in a state of great devotion and sweetness" is not advantageous "for it is not by these things that a true lover of virtue is known, nor doth the spiritual progress and perfection of a man consist in these things."

It is written, "He that hath put aside woman hath put aside the world" and this would seem to be the best illustration of that final detachment which is the prelude to the first step on the path to higher things. The different earthly desires from that of mere animal comfort up to the most ideal love, have all got characteristics that blend into each other, but earthly desire at every turn has to be fought and conquered, or put in other words it is a continual raising of the object of desire, either through the failure of realization or through the satiety that comes of realization. It may have required the experience of many incarnations to weed out of the heart the desire for wealth, for title, for power, for consideration among men, at each death of the body a step may have been gained, and the object of desire raised a degree in nobility, until its culmination is reached in the desire for the ideal union, the true marriage of the soul, to which the bodily union is but a subsidiary supplement. The intensity of a fruitless passion if kept undegraded by any acceptance of a lower love, if steadily nursed through a whole life-time as the one thing worthy of achievement, may have alchemical force enough to transmute this love into what it already resembles, the still loftier and purer love of the Universal Soul. "Woman" may have been "put aside" and the ideal union as a tangible reality in this life despaired of—in moments of enthusiasm the earthly love may appear totally eclipsed by the heavenly—but while lungs fit to breathe the heavenly ether are still undeveloped, descents have to be made to the lower air, the old hopes of love rise again in the breast though more faintly, and the old torture is gone through again.

But if the ultimate goal is steadily kept before the mind's eye, each pang that has been endured should have given added strength. The goad that drives each man to higher things is deep seated in his being, and must remain so through life until it ceases to be a goad at all by the conquest of the special desire against which it was directed, and if only we bear in mind that it is a matter of small moment whether or not we attain our earthly desires, and that the one thing important is to follow loyally what at the time seems to us highest and worthiest—though that highest and worthiest ideal is ever moving upwards—periods of peace and satisfaction are bound to come at last, and we may repeat with Sidney—

"Leave me, O Love, that reachest but to dust;
"And thou my mind aspire to higher things;
"Grow rich in that which never taketh rust;
"Whatever fades but fading pleasure brings.
* * * * * * * * *
"Then farewell World! thy uttermost I see
"Eternal Love, maintain thy life in me!"

PILGRIM.

A WEIRD TALE*[1]

(Continued from May Number)

THERE are many who cannot believe that I have been prevented from writing the whole of this tale at once, and they have smiled when they read that I would continue it "if allowed." But all who know me well will feel that there is some truth in my statement. It may interest those who can read between the lines to know that I attempted several times to finish the tale so as to send it all in one batch to the magazine, but always found that at the point where the first chapter ends my eyes would blur, or the notes ready for the work became simply nonsense, or some other difficulty intervened, so that I was never until now able to get any further with it than the last instalment. It is quite evident to me that it will not be finished, although I know quite well what it is that I have to say. This part must therefore be the last, as in trying to reach a conclusion much time is wasted in fighting against whatever it is that desires to prevent my going into full details. In order then to be able to get out even so much as this I am compelled to omit many incidents which would perhaps be interesting to several persons; but I shall try to remember particularly and relate what things of a philosophical nature were repeated to me.

As I sat there waiting for the host to come back, I felt the moral influence of another mind, like a cool breeze blowing from a mountain. It was the mind of one who had arrived at least at that point where he desired no other thing than that which Karma may bring, and, even as that influence crept over me, I began to hear a voice speaking as it were through a pipe the end of which was in my head, but which stretched an immense distance into space[2] making the voice sound faint and far off. It said:

"The man whose passions enter his heart as waters run into "the unswelling passive ocean obtaineth happiness; not he who "lusteth in his lusts. The man who having abandoned the lusts of "the flesh worketh without inordinate desires, unassuming, and free "from pride, obtaineth happiness. This is divine dependence. A "man being possessed of this confidence in the Supreme goeth not "astray: even at the hour of death should he attain it he shall mix "with the incorporeal nature of Brahm. He who enjoyeth the "*Amreeta* that is left of his offerings obtaineth the eternal spirit "of Brahm the Supreme."

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* This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *The Theosophist* for December, 1885.

[1] In answer to inquiries we beg to state that the incidents of this tale are not to be taken as having literally happened in the precise manner described.—*Ed.*

[2] There are some Theosophists who will recognize this.

The atmosphere of the room seemed to give the memory great retentive power, and when on returning to my room that night I fell upon those sentences in the Bhagavad Gita I knew that they had come to me from a place or a person for whom I should have respect.

Occupied with such thoughts, I did not notice that my host had returned, and looking up was somewhat startled to see him sitting at the other side of the apartment reading a book. The English clothes were gone and a white Indian dhoti covered him, and I could see that he wore round his body the Brahmanical cord. For some reason or other he had hanging from a chain around his neck an ornament which, if it was not rosicrucian, was certainly ancient.

Then I noticed another change. There seemed to have come in with him, though not by the door, other visitors which were not human. At first I could not see them, though I was aware of their presence, and after a few moments I knew that whatever they were they rushed hither and thither about the room as if without purpose. They had yet no form. This absorbed me again so that I said nothing, and my host was also silent. In a few more moments these rushing visitors had taken from the atmosphere enough material to enable them to become partly visible. Now and then they made a ripple in the air as if they disturbed the medium in which they moved about, just as the fin of a fish troubles the surface of the water. I began to think of the elemental shapes we read of in Bulwer Lytton's Zanoni, and which have been illustrated in Henry Kunrath's curious book on the Cabala of the Hebrews.

"Well," said my strange friend, "do you see them? You need "have no fear, as they are harmless. They do not see you, except-"ing one that appears to know you. I was called out so as to try "if it were possible for you to see them, and am glad that you do."

"And the one that knows me," said I. "Can you identify it in any way?"

"Well," said he, "let us call it *he*. He seems to have seen you "—been impressed with your image just as a photograph is on a "plate—somewhere or other, and I also see that he is connected with "you by a name. Yes, it is ———."

And then he mentioned the name of an alleged elemental or nature spirit which at one time, some years ago, was heard of in New York.

"He is looking at you now, and seems to be seeking some-"thing. What did you have or make once that he knew of?"

I then recollected a certain picture, a copy of an Egyptian papyrus of the Hall of Two Truths showing the *trial of the Dead*, and so replied, regretting that I had not got it with me to show my friend. But even as I said that, I saw the very picture lying upon

the table. Where it came from I do not know, as I had no recollection of bringing it with me. However, I asked no questions, and waited, as my host was looking intently at the space above my head.

"Ah, that is what he was looking for, and he seems to be quite pleased," he said, as if I could hear and see just as he did. I knew he referred to the elemental.

In another moment my attention was rivetted on the picture. Its surface bobbed up and down as if waves ran over it, and crackling sounds rose from every part. They grew louder and the motion ceased, while from a certain point arose a thin whitish vapor that wavered unsteadily to and fro. Meanwhile the strange visitors I have mentioned seemed to rush about more in the vicinity of the paper, while now and again one of them took what looked like a flying leap from one end of the room to the other, with a queer faint boom of a metallic character following his rapid motion.

Here I must draw the veil unwillingly. Let me violate the unities and the frame of this tale by just putting down a few sentences, leaving it to the imagination to draw inferences.

"Those strange delineations of form? Quite easily. They were seen by the seeresses in the temple. It is quite true that elementals have no form as such. . . . But there are undoubtedly types, and [those] Egyptians were not the men to do anything unscientifically. . . . There is an occult reason why, although without form, these particular shapes were assumed. And having been once assumed and seen thus by the seer, they always repeated that form to those persons. So the representative of the astral light or of wisdom or the recording angel, is yellow in color, very tall, with a long bill like a stork. Or the one who takes the weight of the soul is always seen with a jackal's head. . . . No, there is no prohibition against telling the occult reason. It is merely this: were it told, only one in a thousand hearers would see any meaning or reason in it. . . . Let your mind reflect also upon the peculiarity that all the judges sitting above there have heads alike, while in color they differ, each one having a feather, the emblem of truth, on his head. . . . No, it is not Hindu, and yet it is the same. They used to say, and I think you may find it in one of their books, that everything is in the Supreme soul, and the Supreme soul in everything."* So the great truth is one, while it can be seen in a thousand different ways. We [Egyptians] took a certain view and made every symbol consistent and of a class consonant with our view. . . . And just as the Hindus are accused of being idolaters because they have represented Krishna with eight arms standing on the great elephant, we, who did not picture an

* Bhagavad-Gita.

eight-armed divinity, are charged with having worshipped jackals, cats and birds. . . . "Yes, it is a pity, but the sand that buries Egypt has not been able to smother the great voice of that sphinx, the *esoteric doctrine*. But not through us except in some such manner as this, now and then. In India the light burns, and in a living people still resides the key—."

Just then the bobbing of the picture began again and the same whitish column wavered over it. The faint boom of the airy elementals recommenced, and again claimed my attention, and then the picture was still.

I may say that the whole of the conversation has not been given. It is not necessary that it should be. My host had maintained perfect silence all the while, and seemed to await my voice, so I said:

"What could have induced you to leave those peaceful places where true progress may be gained?"

"Well," he replied, "very likely they were peaceful, and quite truly progress was possible, but you do not appreciate the dangers also. You have read Zanoni, and perhaps have an exaggerated idea of the horrible Dweller of the Threshold, making of her a real person or thing. But the reality is much worse. When you get into what you have called the 'peaceful places,' this power becomes tenfold stronger than it is found to be on the plane in which we now live in London."

"Why, I supposed that there, free from the cankering anxieties of modern life, the neophyte sailed happily on through plain seas to the shores of the fortunate isles."

"Far from that. On that plane it is found that, although from the spiritual sun there falls upon us the benign influence of those great sages who, entering paranirvana, throw off their accumulated goodness for our benefit, the evil influence that is focussed by the dark side of the moon falls as well, and with its power undiminished. The little temptations and difficulties of your life are as nothing compared to that struggle, for then it is realized that the self is the enemy of the self, as well as its friend."*

"But," said I, "was the fault committed a great one, that it should condemn you to this task?"

"No, not great as you term it. But quite great enough; and in consequence I had to take my choice. In Carácas you saw me as an illusion of a certain character. There I did what was required, the illusion being perfect except as to the eyes. Now you see another illusion, and yet at the same time a reality such as is connoted by that word when used by modern scientists. It is a body that lives and will die. The Karma is hard perhaps, but I grumble

* Bhagavad-Gita.

not. But is it not an illusion in every sense when you know that although this body speaks and thinks, still I the speaker am not visible to you?"

These words are not mine. If some of them seem meaningless or queer to many readers, do not blame the writer. There are those who can understand. There are yet others who have latent thoughts that need but these words to call them into life. I cannot give any greater detail than the above as to himself, because he had reasons for preventing me, although he might perhaps himself tell more to another.

One curious thing of interest he said, which will furnish some with food for thought. It was when I referred to the use of the body he had, so to say, *borrowed*, that he said:

"Don't you know that many experiments are possible in that way, and that some students are taught peculiarly? I have stood aside from this earthly tabernacle many a time to let in those who, notwithstanding that they operated the machine well enough and made quite a respectable use of it, did not know what they did. They were, if you like, dreaming. While here, in this body, they were essentially it, for the time, speaking its words, thinking its thoughts and not able to control it. Not desiring to in fact, because they were completely identified with it. When they waked up in their own apartments either a singular dream whispered a fragmentary song through their brain, or they retained no remembrances whatever of it. In such a case the body, being really master, might do or say that which I would not—or the occupier, temporarily strong, might say out of real recollection things having relation only to that life of which his hearers would have no knowledge."

Just then some clock struck. The atmosphere seemed to clear itself. A strange and yet not unfamiliar perfume floated through the room, and my host said, "Yes, I will show you a verse some one tells me to show you."

He walked over to the table, took up a queer little book printed in Sanscrit, yellow with age and seeming to have been much used. Opening it he read:

*"This supreme spirit and incorruptible Being, even when it is in the body, neither acteth, nor is it affected, because its nature is without beginning and without quality. As the all-moving Akas, or ether, from the minuteness of its parts, passeth everywhere unaffected, even so the omnipresent spirit remaineth in the body unaffected. As a single sun illumines the whole world, even so doth the spirit enlighten every body. They who, with the eye of wisdom, perceive the body and the spirit to be thus distinct, and that there is a final release from the animal nature, go to the Supreme."**

W. Q. J.

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* Bhagavad-Gita, Sect. XIII, last verse.

THEOSOPHY GENERALLY STATED*

[From the Official Report, World's Parliament of Religions.]

THE claim is made that an impartial study of history, religion and literature will show the existence from ancient times of a great body of philosophical, scientific and ethical doctrine forming the basis and origin of all similar thought in modern systems. It is at once religious and scientific, asserting that religion and science should never be separated. It puts forward sublime religious and ideal teachings, but at the same time shows that all of it can be demonstrated to reason, and that authority other than that has no place, thus preventing the hypocrisy which arises from asserting dogmas on authority which no one can show as resting on reason. This ancient body of doctrine is known as the "Wisdom Religion" and was always taught by adepts or initiates therein who preserve it through all time. Hence, and from other doctrines demonstrated, it is shown that man, being spirit and immortal, is able to perpetuate his real life and consciousness, and has done so during all time in the persons of those higher flowers of the human race who are members of an ancient and high brotherhood who concern themselves with the soul development of man, held by them to include every process of evolution on all planes. The initiates, being bound by the law of evolution, must work with humanity as its development permits. Therefore from time to time they give out again and again the same doctrine which from time to time grows obscured in various nations and places. This is the wisdom religion, and they are the keepers of it. At times they come to nations as great teachers and "saviours," who only re-promulgate the old truths and system of ethics. This therefore holds that humanity is capable of infinite perfection both in time and quality, the saviours and adepts being held up as examples of that possibility.

From this living and presently acting body of perfected men H. P. Blavatsky declared she received the impulse to once more bring forward the old ideas, and from them also received several keys to ancient and modern doctrines that had been lost during modern struggles toward civilization, and also that she was furnished by them with some doctrines really ancient but entirely new to the present day in any exoteric shape. These she wrote among the other keys furnished by her to her fellow members and the world at large. Added, then, to the testimony through all time found in records of all nations, we have this modern explicit assertion that the ancient learned and humanitarian body of adepts still

*This article was first printed in *Lucifer* for December, 1893.

exists on this earth and takes an interest in the development of the race.

Theosophy postulates an eternal principle called the unknown, which can never be cognized except through its manifestations. This eternal principle is in and is every thing and being; it periodically and eternally manifests itself and recedes again from manifestation. In this ebb and flow evolution proceeds and itself is the progress of the manifestation. The perceived universe is the manifestation of this unknown, including spirit and matter, for Theosophy holds that those are but the two opposite poles of the one unknown principle. They coëxist, are not separate nor separable from each other, or, as the Hindû scriptures say, there is no particle of matter without spirit, and no particle of spirit without matter. In manifesting itself the spirit-matter differentiates on seven planes, each more dense on the way down to the plane of our senses than its predecessor, the substance in all being the same, only differing in degree. Therefore from this view the whole universe is alive, not one atom of it being in any sense dead. It is also conscious and intelligent, its consciousness and intelligence being present on all planes though obscured on this one. On this plane of ours the spirit focalizes itself in all human beings who choose to permit it to do so, and the refusal to permit it is the cause of ignorance, of sin, of all sorrow and suffering. In all ages some have come to this high state, have grown to be as gods, are partakers actively in the work of nature, and go on from century to century widening their consciousness and increasing the scope of their government in nature. This is the destiny of all beings, and hence at the outset Theosophy postulates this perfectibility of the race, removes the idea of innate unregenerable wickedness, and offers a purpose and an aim for life which is consonant with the longings of the soul and with its real nature, tending at the same time to destroy pessimism with its companion, despair.

In Theosophy the world is held to be the product of the evolution of the principle spoken of from the very lowest first forms of life guided as it proceeded by intelligent perfected beings from other and older evolutions, and compounded also of the egos or individual spirits for and by whom it emanates. Hence man as we know him is held to be a conscious spirit, the flower of evolution, with other and lower classes of egos below him in the lower kingdoms, all however coming up and destined one day to be on the same human stage as we now are, we then being higher still. Man's consciousness being thus more perfect is able to pass from one to another of the planes of differentiation mentioned. If he mistakes any one of them for the reality that he is in his essence, he is deluded; the object of evolution then is to give him complete

self-consciousness so that he may go on to higher stages in the progress of the universe. His evolution after coming on the human stage is for the getting of experience, and in order to so raise up and purify the various planes of matter with which he has to do, that the voice of the spirit may be fully heard and comprehended.

He is a religious being because he is a spirit encased in matter, which is in turn itself spiritual in essence. Being a spirit he requires vehicles with which to come in touch with all the planes of nature included in evolution, and it is these vehicles that make of him an intricate, composite being, liable to error, but at the same time able to rise above all delusions and conquer the highest place. He is in miniature the universe, for he is as spirit, manifesting himself to himself by means of seven differentiations. Therefore is he known in Theosophy as a sevenfold being. The Christian division of body, soul, and spirit is accurate so far as it goes, but will not answer to the problems of life and nature, unless, as is not the case, those three divisions are each held to be composed of others, which would raise the possible total to seven. The spirit stands alone at the top, next comes the spiritual soul or Buddhi as it is called in Sanskrit. This partakes more of the spirit than any below it, and is connected with Manas or mind, these three being the real trinity of man, the imperishable part, the real thinking entity living on the earth in the other and denser vehicles by its evolution. Below in order of quality is the plane of the desires and passions shared with the animal kingdom, unintelligent, and the producer of ignorance flowing from delusion. It is distinct from the will and judgment, and must therefore be given its own place. On this plane is gross life, manifesting, not as spirit from which it derives its essence, but as energy and motion on this plane. It being common to the whole objective plane and being everywhere, is also to be classed by itself, the portion used by man being given up at the death of the body. Then last, before the objective body, is the model or double of the outer physical case. This double is the astral body belonging to the astral plane of matter, not so dense as physical molecules, but more tenuous and much stronger, as well as lasting. It is the original of the body permitting the physical molecules to arrange and show themselves thereon, allowing them to go and come from day to day as they are known to do, yet ever retaining the fixed shape and contour given by the astral double within. These lower four principles or sheaths are the transitory perishable part of man, not himself, but in every sense the instrument he uses, given up at the hour of death like an old garment, and rebuilt out of the general reservoir at every new birth. The trinity is the real man, the thinker, the individuality that passes from house to house, gaining experience at each re-

birth, while it suffers and enjoys according to its deeds—it is the one central man, the living spirit-soul.

Now this spiritual man, having always existed, being intimately concerned in evolution, dominated by the law of cause and effect, because in himself he is that very law, showing moreover on this plane varieties of force of character, capacity, and opportunity, his very presence must be explained, while the differences noted have to be accounted for. The doctrine of reïncarnation does all this. It means that man as a thinker, composed of soul, mind and spirit, occupies body after body in life after life on the earth which is the scene of his evolution, and where he must, under the very laws of his being, complete that evolution, once it has been begun. In any one life he is known to others as a personality, but in the whole stretch of eternity he is one individual, feeling in himself an identity not dependent on name, form, or recollection.

This doctrine is the very base of Theosophy, for it explains life and nature. It is one aspect of evolution, for as it is reëmbodiment in meaning, and as evolution could not go on without reëmbodiment, it is evolution itself, as applied to the human soul. But it is also a doctrine believed in at the time given to Jesus and taught in the early ages of Christianity, being now as much necessary to that religion as it is to any other to explain texts, to reconcile the justice of God with the rough and merciless aspect of nature and life to most mortals, and to throw a light perceptible by reason on all the problems that vex us in our journey through this world. The vast, and under any other doctrine unjust, difference between the savage and the civilized man as to both capacity, character, and opportunity can be understood only through this doctrine, and coming to our own stratum the differences of the same kind may only thus be explained. It vindicates Nature and God, and removes from religion the blot thrown by men who have postulated creeds which paint the creator as a demon. Each man's life and character are the outcome of his previous lives and thoughts. Each is his own judge, his own executioner, for it is his own hand that forges the weapon which works for his punishment, and each by his own life reaches reward, rises to heights of knowledge and power for the good of all who may be left behind him. Nothing is left to chance, favour, or partiality, but all is under the governance of law. Man is a thinker, and by his thoughts he makes the causes for woe or bliss; for his thoughts produce his acts. He is the centre for any disturbance of the universal harmony, and to him as the centre the disturbance must return so as to bring about equilibrium, for nature always works towards harmony. Man is always carrying on a series of thoughts, which extend back to the remote past, continually making action and reäction. He is thus responsible for all his thoughts and acts, and in that his complete

responsibility is established; his own spirit is the essence of this law and provides for ever compensation for every disturbance and adjustment for all effects. This is the law of Karma or justice, sometimes called the ethical law of causation. It is not foreign to the Christian scriptures, for both Jesus and St. Paul clearly enunciated it. Jesus said we should be judged as we gave judgment and should receive the measure meted to others. St. Paul said: "Brethren, be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that also shall he reap." And that sowing and reaping can only be possible under the doctrines of Karma and reïncarnation.

But what of death and after? Is heaven a place or is it not? Theosophy teaches, as may be found in all sacred books, that after death the soul reaps a rest. This is from its own nature. It is a thinker, and cannot during life fulfil and carry out all nor even a small part of the myriads of thoughts entertained. Hence when at death it casts off the body and the astral body, and is released from the passions and desires, its natural forces have immediate sway and it thinks its thoughts out on the soul plane, clothed in a finer body suitable to that existence. This is called Devachan. It is the very state that has brought about the descriptions of heaven common to all religions, but this doctrine is very clearly put in the Buddhist and Hindû religions. It is a time of rest, because the physical body being absent the consciousness is not in the completer touch with visible nature which is possible on the material plane. But it is a real existence, and no more illusionary than earth life; it is where the essence of the thoughts of life that were as high as character permitted, expands and is garnered by the soul and mind. When the force of these thoughts is fully exhausted the soul is drawn back once more to earth, to that environment which is sufficiently like unto itself to give it the proper further evolution. This alternation from state to state goes on until the being rises from repeated experiences above ignorance, and realizes in itself the actual unity of all spiritual beings. Then it passes on to higher and greater steps on the evolutionary road.

No new ethics are presented by Theosophy, as it is held that right ethics are for ever the same. But in the doctrines of Theosophy are to be found the philosophical and reasonable basis for ethics and the natural enforcement of them in practice. Universal brotherhood is that which will result in doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, and in your loving your neighbour as yourself—declared as right by all teachers in the great religions of the world.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE BLAVATSKY LODGE

OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY. DISCUSSIONS OF THE STANZAS OF THE FIRST VOLUME OF "THE SECRET DOCTRINE."

I.

The following "Transactions" were compiled from shorthand notes taken at the meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge of the Theosophical Society, January 10th to June 20th, 1889, and later printed in pamphlet form. Copies of this pamphlet are getting rarer with every year. THEOSOPHY is therefore reprinting the "Transactions" for the benefit of present-day students. Part I consists of discussions of Stanzas I and II of the *"Book of Dzyan,"* upon which *"The Secret Doctrine"* is based. The answers to the questions were given by H. P. Blavatsky. Students not possessing *"The Secret Doctrine,"* will find that these Stanzas are also printed in H. P. Blavatsky's *"Voice of the Silence,"* which is owned by most students, or can be purchased, through THEOSOPHY, at the nominal price of seventy-five cents, postpaid.

STANZA I.

Sloka (I). THE ETERNAL PARENT (*Space*), WRAPPED IN HER EVER INVISIBLE ROBES, HAD SLUMBERED ONCE AGAIN FOR SEVEN ETERNITIES.

Q. Space in the abstract is explained in the Proem (pp. 8 and 9) as follows:

". . . . Absolute unity cannot pass to infinity; for infinity presupposes the limitless extension of *something,* and the duration of that 'something'; and the One All is like Space—which is its only mental and physical representation on this Earth, or our plane of existence—neither an object of, nor a subject to, perception. If one could suppose the Eternal Infinite All, the Omnipresent Unity, instead of being in Eternity, becoming through periodical manifestation a manifold Universe, or a multiple personality, that Unity would cease to be one. Locke's idea that 'pure Space is capable of neither resistance nor motion' is incorrect. Space is neither a 'limitless void' nor a 'conditioned fulness,' but both, being on the plane of absolute abstraction, the ever-incognisable Deity, which is void only to finite minds, and on that of *mayavic* perception, the Plenum, the absolute Container of all that is, whether manifested or unmanifested; it is, therefore, that ABSOLUTE ALL. There is no difference between the Christian Apostle's 'In Him we live and move and have our being,' and the Hindu Rishi's, 'The Universe lives in, proceeds from, and will return to, Brahma (Brahmâ)'; for Brahma (neuter), the unmanifested, is that Universe *in abscondito,* and Brahmâ, the manifested, is the Logos, made male-female in the symbolical orthodox dogmas. The God

Secret Doctrine references are to the Original Edition.—[ED. THEOSOPHY.]

of the Apostle-Initiate, and of the Rishi, being both the Unseen and the Visible SPACE. Space is called, in the esoteric symbolism, 'The Seven-Skinned Eternal Mother-Father.' It is composed from its undifferentiated to its differentiated surface of seven layers.

" 'What is that which was, is, and will be, whether there is a Universe or not; whether there be gods or none?' asks the esoteric Senzar Catechism. And the answer made is—SPACE."*

But why is the Eternal Parent, Space, spoken of as feminine?

A. Not in all cases, for in the above extract Space is called the "Eternal Mother-Father"; but when it is so spoken of the reason is that though it is impossible to define Parabrahm, yet once that we speak of that first something which *can* be conceived, it has to be treated of as a feminine principle. In all cosmogonies the first differentiation was considered feminine. It is Mulaprakriti which conceals or veils Parabrahm; Sephira the *light* that emanates first from Ain-Soph; and in Hesiod it is Gaea who springs from Chaos, preceding Eros (THEOG. IV.; 201-246). This is repeated in all subsequent and less abstract material creations, as witnessed by Eve, created from the rib of Adam, etc. It is the goddess and goddesses who come first. The first emanation becomes the immaculate Mother from whom proceed all the gods, or the anthropomorphized creative forces. We have to adopt the masculine or the feminine gender, for we cannot use the neuter *it*. From IT, strictly speaking, nothing can proceed, neither a radiation nor an emanation.

Q. Is this first emanation identical with the Egyptian Neïth?

A. In reality it is beyond Neïth, but in one sense or in a lower aspect it is Neïth.

Q. Then the IT *itself is not the "Seven-Skinned Eternal Mother-Father"?*

A. Assuredly not. The IT is, in the Hindu philosophy, Parabrahm, that which is beyond Brahmâ, or, as it is now called in Europe, the "unknowable." The space of which we speak is the female aspect of Brahmâ, the male. At the first flutter of differentiation, the Subjective proceeds to emanate, or fall, like a shadow into the Objective, and becomes what was called the Mother Goddess, from whom proceeds the Logos, the Son and Father God at the same time, both unmanifested, one the Potentiality, the other the Potency. But the former must not be confounded with the manifested Logos, also called the "Son" in all cosmogonies.

Q. Is the first differentiation from the absolute IT *always feminine?*

A. Only as a figure of speech; in strict philosophy it is sexless; but the female aspect is the first it assumes in human concep-

*S. D., I., 8, O. E.

tions, its subsequent materialisation in any philosophy depending on the degree of the spirituality of the race or nation that produced the system. For instance: in the Kabbala of the Talmudists IT is called AIN-SOPH, the endless, the boundless, the infinite (the attribute being always negative), which *absolute* Principle is yet referred to as *He!!* From it, this negative, Boundless Circle of Infinite Light, emanates the first Sephira, the Crown, which the Talmudists call "Torah," the law, explaining that she is the wife of Ain-Soph. This is anthropomorphising the Spiritual with a vengeance.

Q. Is it the same in the Hindu Philosophies?

A. Exactly the opposite. For if we turn to the Hindu cosmogonies, we find that Parabrahm is not even mentioned therein, but only Mulaprakriti. The latter is, so to speak, the lining or aspect of Parabrahm in the invisible universe. Mulaprakriti means the Root of Nature or Matter. But Parabrahm cannot be called the "Root," for it is the absolute *Rootless Root* of all. Therefore, we must begin with Mulaprakriti, or the Veil of this unknowable. Here again we see that the first is the Mother Goddess, the reflection or the subjective root, on the first plane of Substance. Then follows, issuing from, or rather residing in, this Mother Goddess, the unmanifested Logos, he who is both her Son and Husband at once, called the "concealed Father." From these proceeds the first-manifested Logos, or Spirit, and the Son from whose substance emanate the Seven Logoi, whose synthesis, viewed as one collective Force, becomes the Architect of the Visible Universe. They are the Elohim of the Jews.

Q. What aspect of Space, or the unknown deity, called in the Vedas "THAT," *which is mentioned further on, is here called the "Eternal Parent"?*

A. It is the Vedantic Mulaprakriti, and the Svâbhâvat of the Buddhists, or that androgynous *something* of which we have been speaking, which is both differentiated and undifferentiated. In its first principle it is a pure abstraction, which becomes differentiated only when it is transformed, in the process of time, into Prakriti. If compared with the human principles it corresponds to Buddhi, while Atma would correspond to Parabrahm, Manas to Mahat, and so on.

Q. What, then, are the seven layers of Space, for in the "Proem" we read about the "Seven-Skinned Mother-Father"?

A. Plato and Hermes Trismegistus would have regarded this as the *Divine Thought,* and Aristotle would have viewed this "Mother-Father" as the "privation" of matter. It is that which will become the seven planes of being, commencing with the spiritual and passing through the psychic to the material plane. The seven planes of thought or the seven states of consciousness correspond to these planes. All these septenaries are symbolized by the seven "Skins."

Q. The divine ideas in the Divine Mind? But the Divine Mind is not yet.

A. The Divine Mind *is*, and must be, before differentiation takes place. It is called the divine Ideation, which is eternal in its Potentiality and periodical in its Potency, when it becomes *Mahat, Anima Mundi* or Universal Soul. But remember that, however you name it, each of these conceptions has its most metaphysical, most material, and also intermediate aspects.

Q. What is the meaning of the term "Ever invisible robes"?

A. It is of course, as every allegory in the Eastern philosophies, a figurative expression. Perhaps it may be the hypothetical Protyle that Professor Crookes is in search of, but which can certainly never be found on this our earth or plane. It is the non-differentiated substance or spiritual matter.

Q. Is it what is called "Laya"?

A. "Robes" and all are in the *Laya* condition, the point from which, or at which, the primordial substance begins to differentiate and thus gives birth to the universe and all in it.

Q. Are the "invisible robes" so called because they are not objective to any differentiation of consciousness?

A. Say rather, invisible to finite consciousness, if such consciousness were possible at that stage of evolution. Even for the Logos, Mulaprakriti is a veil, the Robes in which the Absolute is enveloped. Even the Logos cannot perceive the Absolute, say the Vedantins.*

Q. Is Mulaprakriti the correct term to use?

A. The Mulaprakriti of the Vedantins is the Aditi of the Vedas. The Vedanta philosophy means literally "the end or Synthesis of all knowledge." Now there are six schools of Hindu philosophy, which, however, will be found, on strict analysis, to agree perfectly in substance. Fundamentally they are identical, but there is such a wealth of names, such a quantity of side issues, details, and ornamentations—some emanations being their own fathers, and fathers born from their own daughters—that one becomes lost as in a jungle. State anything you please from the esoteric standpoint to a Hindu, and, if he so wishes, he can, from his own particular system, contradict or refute you. Each of the six schools has its own peculiar views and terms. So that unless the terminology of one school is adopted and used throughout the discussion, there is great danger of misunderstanding.

Q. Then the same identical term is used in quite a different sense by different philosophies? For instance, Buddhi has one meaning in the Esoteric and quite a different sense in the Sankya philosophy. Is not this so?

A. Precisely, and quite a different sense in the Vishnu Purana, which speaks of seven Prakritis emanating from Mahat, and

**Vide* Mr. Subba Row's four Lectures, *Notes on the Bhagavat Gita.*

calls the latter Maha-Buddhi. Fundamentally, however, the ideas are the same, though the terms differ with each school, and the correct sense is lost in this maze of personifications. It would, perhaps, if possible, be best to invent for ourselves a new nomenclature. Owing, however, to the poverty of European languages, especially English, in philosophical terms, the undertaking would be somewhat difficult.

Q. Could not the term "Protyle" be employed to represent the Laya condition?

A. Scarcely; the Protyle of Professor Crookes is probably used to denote homogeneous matter on the most material plane of all, whereas the *substance* symbolized by the "Robes" of the "Eternal Parent" is on the seventh plane of matter counting upwards, or rather from without within. This can never be discovered on the lowest, or rather most outward and material plane.

Q. Is there, then, on each of the seven planes, matter relatively homogeneous for every plane?

A. That is so; but such matter is homogeneous only for those who are on the same plane of perception; so that if the Protyle of modern science is ever discovered, it will be homogeneous only to us. The illusion may last for some time, perhaps until the sixth race, for humanity is ever changing, physically and mentally, and let us hope spiritually too, perfecting itself more and more with every race and sub-race.

Q. Would it not be a great mistake to use any term which has been used by scientists with another meaning? Protoplasm had once almost the same sense as Protyle, but its meaning has now become narrowed.

A. It would most decidedly; the *Hyle* (ὕλη) of the Greeks, however, most certainly did not apply to the matter of this plane, for they adopted it from the Chaldean cosmogony, where it was used in a highly metaphysical sense.

Q. But the word Hyle is now used by the materialists to express very nearly the same idea as that to which we apply the term Mulaprakriti.

A. It may be so; but Dr. Lewins and his brave half-dozen of Hylo-Idealists are hardly of this opinion, for in their system the metaphysical meaning is entirely disregarded and lost sight of.

Q. Then perhaps after all Laya is the best term to use?

A. Not so, for Laya does not mean any particular something or some plane or other, but denotes a state or condition. It is a Sanskrit term, conveying the idea of something in an undifferentiated and changeless state, a zero point wherein all differentiation ceases.

Q. The first differentiation would represent matter on its seventh plane: must we not, therefore, suppose that Professor Crookes' Protyle is also matter on its seventh plane?

A. The ideal Protyle of Professor Crookes is matter in that state which he calls the "zero-point."

Q. That is to say, the Laya point of this plane?

A. It is not at all clear whether Professor Crookes is occupied with other planes or admits their existence. The object of his search is the protylic atom, which, as no one has ever seen it, is simply a new working hypothesis of Science. For what in reality is an atom?

Q. It is a convenient definition of what is supposed to be, or rather a convenient term to divide up, a molecule.

A. But surely they must have come by this time to the conclusion that the atom is no more a convenient term than the supposed seventy odd elements. It has been the custom to laugh at the four and five elements of the ancients; but now Professor Crookes has come to the conclusion that, strictly speaking, there is no such thing as a chemical element at all. In fact, so far from discovering the atom, a single simple molecule has not yet been arrived at.

Q. It should be remembered that Dalton, who first spoke on the subject, called it the "Atomic Theory."

A. Quite so; but, as shown by Sir W. Hamilton, the term is used in an erroneous sense by the modern schools of science, which, while laughing at metaphysics, apply a purely metaphysical term to physics, so that nowadays "theory" begins to usurp the prerogatives of "axiom."

Q. What are the "Seven Eternities," and how can there be such a division in Pralaya, when there is no one to be conscious of time?

A. The modern astronomer knows the "ordinances of Heaven" by no means better than his ancient brother did. If asked whether he could "bring forth Mazzaroth in his season," or if he was with "him" who "spread out the sky," he would have to answer sadly, just as Job did, in the negative. Yet this in no wise prevents him from speculating about the age of the Sun, Moon, and Earth, and "calculating" geological periods from that time when there was not a living man, with or without consciousness, on earth. Why, therefore, should not the same privilege be granted to the ancients?

Q. But why should the term "Seven Eternities" be employed?

A. The term "Seven Eternities" is employed owing to the invariable law of analogy. As Manvantara is divided into seven periods, so is Pralaya; as day is composed of twelve hours so is night. Can we say that because we are asleep during the night and lose consciousness of time, that therefore the hours do not strike? Pralaya is the "Night" after the Manvantaric "Day." There is no one by, and consciousness is asleep with the rest. But

since it exists, and is in full activity during Manvantara; and since we are fully alive to the fact that the law of analogy and periodicity is immutable, and, being so, that it must act equally at both ends, why cannot the phrase be used?

Q. But how can an eternity be counted?

A. Perhaps the query arises owing to the general misunderstanding of the term "Eternity." We Westerns are foolish enough to speculate about that which has neither beginning nor end, and we imagine that the ancients must have done the same. They did not, however: no philosopher in days of old ever took "Eternity" to mean beginningless and endless duration. Neither the Æons of the Greeks nor the Naroses convey this meaning. In fact, they had no word to convey this precise sense. Parabrahm, Ain-Soph, and the *Zeruana-Akerne* of the Avesta alone represent such an Eternity; all the other periods are finite and astronomical, based on tropical years and other enormous cycles. The word Æon, which in the Bible is translated by Eternity, means not only a finite period, but also an angel and being.

Q. But is it not correct to say that in Pralaya too there is the "Greath Breath"?

A. Assuredly: for the "Great Breath" is ceaseless, and is, so to speak, the universal and eternal *perpetuum mobile?*

Q. If so, it is impossible to divide it into periods, for this does away with the idea of absolute and complete nothingness. It seems somewhat incompatible that any "number" of periods should be spoken of, although one might speak of so many outbreathings and indrawings of the "Great Breath."

A. This would make away with the idea of absolute Rest, were not this absoluteness of Rest counteracted by the absoluteness of Motion. Therefore one expression is as good as the other. There is a magnificent poem on Pralaya, written by a very ancient Rishi, who compares the motion of the Great Breath during Pralaya to the rhythmical motions of the Unconscious Ocean.

Q. The difficulty is when the word "eternity" is used instead of "Æon."

A. Why should a Greek word be used when there is a more familiar expression, especially as it is fully explained in the *Secret Doctrine*? You may call it a *relative,* or a Manvantaric and Pralayic eternity, if you like.

Q. Is the relation of Pralaya and Manvantara strictly analogous to the relations between sleeping and waking?

A. In a certain sense only; during night we all exist personally, and *are* individually, though we sleep and may be unconscious of so living. But during Pralaya every thing differentiated, as every unit, disappears from the phenomenal universe and is merged in, or rather transferred into, the One noumenal. Therefore, *de facto,* there is a great difference.

Q. Sleep has been called the "Shady side of life;" may Pralaya be called the shady side of Cosmic life?

A. It may in a certain way be called so. Pralaya is dissolution of the visible into the invisible, the heterogeneous into the homogeneous—a time of rest, therefore. Even cosmic matter, indestructible though it be in its essence, must have a time of rest, and return to its *Layam* state. The absoluteness of the all-containing One essence has to manifest itself equally in rest and activity.

Sloka (2). TIME WAS NOT, FOR IT LAY ASLEEP IN THE INFINITE BOSOM OF DURATION.

Q. What is the difference between Time and Duration?

A. Duration *is;* it has neither beginning nor end. How can you call that which has neither beginning nor end, Time? Duration is beginningless and endless; Time is finite.

Q. Is, then, Duration the infinite, and Time the finite conception?

A. Time can be divided; Duration—in our philosophy, at least—cannot. Time is divisible in Duration—or, as you put it, the one is something *within* Time and Space, whereas the other is outside of both.

Q. The only way one can define Time is by the motion of the earth?

A. But we can also define Time in our conceptions.

Q. Duration, rather?

A. No, Time; for as to Duration, it is impossible to divide it or set up landmarks therein. Duration with us is the one eternity, not relative, but absolute.

Q. Can it be said that the essential idea of Duration is existence?

A. No; existence has limited and definite periods, whereas Duration, having neither beginning nor end, is a perfect abstraction which contains Time. Duration is like Space, which is an abstraction too, and is equally without beginning or end. It is in its concretency and limitation only that it becomes a representation and something. Of course the distance between two points is called space; it may be enormous or it may be infinitesimal, yet it will always be space. But all such specifications are divisions in human conception. In reality Space is what the ancients called the One invisible and unknown (now unknowable) Deity.

Q. Then Time is the same as Space, being one in the abstract?

A. As two abstractions they may be one; but this would apply to Duration and Abstract Space rather than to Time and Space.

Q. Space is the objective and Time the subjective side of all manifestation. In reality they are the only attributes of the infinite; but attribute is perhaps a bad term to use, inasmuch as they are, so to speak, co-extensive with the infinite. It may, however, be objected that they are nothing but the creations of our own intellect; simply the forms in which we cannot help conceiving things.

A. That sounds like an argument of our friends the Hylo-idealists; but here we speak of the noumenal and not of the phenomenal universe. In the occult catechism (*Vide Secret Doctrine*) it is asked: "What is that which always IS, which you cannot imagine as not *being*, do what you may?" The answer is—SPACE. For there may not be a single man in the universe to think of it, not a single eye to perceive it, nor a single brain to sense it, but still Space *is, ever was, and ever will be,* and you cannot make away with it.

Q. Because we cannot help thinking of it, perhaps?

A. Our thinking of it has nothing to do with the question. Try, rather, if you can think of anything with Space excluded and you will soon find out the impossibility of such a conception. Space exists where there is nothing else, and must so exist whether the Universe is one absolute vacuum or a full Pleroma.

Q. Modern Philosophers have reduced it to this, that space and time are nothing but attributes, nothing but accidents.

A. And they would be right, were their reduction the fruit of true science instead of being the result of *Avidya* and *Maya*. We find also Buddha saying that even Nirvâna, after all, is but *Maya*, or an illusion; but the Lord Buddha based what he said on *knowledge*, not *speculation*.

Q. But are eternal Space and Duration the only attributes of the Infinite?

A. Space and Duration, being eternal, cannot be called attributes, as they are only the *aspects* of that Infinite. Nor can that Infinite, if you mean by it The Absolute Principle, have any attributes whatever, as only that which is itself finite and conditioned can have any relation to something else. All this is philosophically wrong.

Q. We can conceive of no matter which is not extended, no extension which is not extension of something. Is it the same on higher planes? And if so, what is the substance which fills absolute space, and is it identical with that space?

A. If your "trained intellect" cannot conceive of any other kind of matter, perhaps one less trained but more open to spiritual perceptions can. It does not follow, because you say so, that such a conception of Space is the only one possible, even on our Earth. For even on this plane of ours there are other and various intellects, besides those of man, in creatures visible and invisible, from

minds of subjective high and low Beings to objective animals and the lowest organisms, in short, "from the Deva to the elephant, from the elemental to the ant." Now, in relation to its own plane of conception and perception, the ant has as good an intellect as we have ourselves, and a better one; for though it cannot express it in words, yet, over and above instinct, the ant shows very high reasoning powers, as all of us know. Thus, finding on our own plane—if we credit the teachings of Occultism—so many and such varied states of consciousness and intelligence, we have no right to take into consideration and account only our own human consciousness, as though no other existed outside of it. And if we cannot presume to decide how far insect consciousness goes, how can we limit consciousness, of which Science knows nothing, to this plane?

Q. But why not? Surely natural science can discover all that has to be discovered, even in the ant?

A. Such is your view; to the occultist, however, such confidence is misplaced, in spite of Sir John Lubbock's labours. Science may speculate, but, with its present methods, will never be able to prove the certitude of such speculations. If a scientist could become an ant for a while, and think as an ant, and remember his experience on returning to his own sphere of consciousness, then only would he know something for certain of this interesting insect. As it is, he can only speculate, making inferences from the ant's behaviour.

Q. The ant's conception of time and space are not our own, then. Is it this that you mean?

A. Precisely; the ant has conceptions of time and space which are its own, not ours; conceptions which are entirely on another plane; we have, therefore, no right to deny *à priori* the existence of other planes only because we can form no idea of them, but which exist nevertheless—planes higher and lower than our own by many degrees, as witness the ant.

Q. The difference between the animal and man from this point of view seems to be that the former is born more or less with all its faculties, and, generally speaking, does not appreciably gain on this, while the latter is gradually learning and improving. Is not that really the point?

A. Just so; but you have to remember why: not because man has one "principle" more than the tiniest insect, but because man is a perfected animal, the vehicle of a fully developed *monad*, self-conscious and deliberately following its own line of progress, whereas in the insect, and even the higher animal, the higher triad of principles is absolutely dormant.

Q. Is there any consciousness, or conscious being, to cognize and make a division of time at the first flutter of manifestation? In his Lecture on the Bhagavat Gita, Mr. Subba Row, in speaking

of the First Logos, seems to imply both consciousness and intelligence.

A. But he did not explain which Logos was referred to, and I believe he spoke in general. In the Esoteric Philosophy the First is the unmanifested, and the Second the manifested Logos. Iswara stands for that Second, and Nârâyana for the unmanifested Logos. Subba Row is an Adwaitee and a learned Vedantin, and explained from his standpoint. We do so from ours. In the *Secret Doctrine,* that from which the manifested Logos is born is translated by the "Eternal Mother-Father"; while in the Vishnu Purâna it is described as the Egg of the World, surrounded by seven skins, layers or zones. It is in this Golden Egg that Brahmâ, the male, is born and that Brahmâ is in reality the Second Logos or even the Third, according to the enumeration adopted; for a certainty he is not the First or highest, the point which is everywhere and nowhere. Mahat, in the Esoteric interpretations, is in reality the Third Logos or the Synthesis of the Seven creative rays, the Seven Logoi. Out of the seven so-called *Creations,* Mahat is the third, for it is the Universal and Intelligent Soul, Divine Ideation, combining the ideal plans and prototypes of all things in the manifested objective as well as subjective world. In the Sankhya and Purânic doctrines Mahat is the first product of *Pradhâna,* informed by Kshetrajna "Spirit-Substance." In Esoteric philosophy Kshetrajna is the name given to our informing EGOS.

Q. Is it then the first manifestation in our objective universe?

A. It is the first Principle in it, made sensible or perceptible to divine though not human senses. But if we proceed from the Unknowable, we will find it to be the third, and corresponding to Manas, or rather Buddhi-Manas.

Q. Then the First Logos is the first point within the circle?

A. The point within the circle which has neither limit nor boundaries, nor can it have any name or attribute. This first unmanifested Logos is simultaneous with the line drawn across the diameter of the Circle. The first line or diameter is the Mother-Father; from it proceeds the Second Logos, which contains in itself the Third Manifested Word. In the Purânas, for instance, it is again said that the first production of Akâsa is Sound, and Sound means in this case the "Word," the expression of the unuttered thought, the manifested Logos, that of the Greeks and Platonists and St. John. Dr. Wilson and other Orientalists speak of this conception of the Hindus as an absurdity, for according to them Akâsa and Chaos are identical. But if they knew that Akâsa and Pradhâna are but two aspects of the same thing, and remember that Mahat, the *divine ideation on our plane*—is that manifested *Sound* or Logos, they would laugh at themselves and their own ignorance.

Q. With reference to the following passage, what is the consciousness which takes cognizance of time? Is the consciousness of time limited to the plane of waking physical consciousness, or does it exist on higher planes? In the Secret Doctrine, I., 37, it is said that:— "Time is only an illusion produced by the succession of states of consciousness as we travel through eternal duration, and it does not exist where no consciousness exists."

A. Here consciousness only on our plane is meant, not the eternal *divine* Consciousness which we call the Absolute. The consciousness of time, in the present sense of the word, does not exist even in sleep; much less, therefore, can it exist in the essentially absolute. Can the sea be said to have a conception of time in its rhythmical striking on the shore, or in the movement of its waves? The Absolute cannot be said to have a consciousness, or, at any rate, a consciousness such as we have here. It has neither consciousness, nor desire, nor wish, nor thought, because it is absolute thought, absolute desire, absolute consciousness, absolute "all."

Q. Is it what we refer to as BE-NESS, *or* SAT?

A. Our kind critics have found the word "Be-ness" very amusing, but there is no other way of translating the Sanskrit term, *Sat.* It is not existence, for existence can only apply to *phenomena,* never to *noumena,* the very etymology of the Latin term contradicting such assertion, as *ex* means "from" or "out of," and *sistere* "to stand"; therefore, something appearing being then where it was not before. Existence, moreover, implies something having a beginning and an end. How can the term, therefore, be applied to that which ever was, and of which it cannot be predicated that it ever issued from something else?

Q. The Hebrew Jehovah was "I am."

A. And so was Ormuzd, the Ahura-Mazda of the old Mazdeans. In this sense every man as much as every God can boast of his existence, saying "I am that I am."

Q. But surely "Be-ness" has some connection with the word "to be"?

A. Yes; but "Be-ness" is not *being,* for it is equally *non-being.* We cannot conceive it, for our intellects are finite and our language far more limited and conditioned even than our minds. How, therefore, can we express that which we can only conceive of by a series of negatives?

Q. A German could more easily express it by the word "Sein"; "das sein" would be a very good equivalent of "Be-ness"; the latter term may sound absurd to unaccustomed English ears, but "das sein" is a perfectly familiar term and idea to a German. But we were speaking of consciousness in Space and Time.

A. This Consciousness is finite, having beginning and end. But where is the word for such finite Consciousness which still, owing to *Mâya,* believes itself infinite? Not even the Devachanee

is conscious of time. All is present in Devachan; there is no past, otherwise the *Ego* would recall and regret it; no future, or it would desire to have it. Seeing, therefore, that Devachan is a state of bliss in which everything is present, the Devachanee is said to have no conception or idea of time; everything is to him as in a vivid dream, a reality.

Q. But we may dream a lifetime in half a second, being conscious of a succession of states of consciousness, events taking place one after the other.

A. After the dream only; no such consciousness exists while dreaming.

Q. May we not compare the recollection of a dream to a person giving the description of a picture, and having to mention all the parts and details because he cannot present the whole before the mind's eye of the listener?

A. That is a very good analogy.

(*To be continued.*)

OTHER LIVES AND OTHER WORLDS*

COULD we obtain a closer view of some of the celestial bodies, we should probably find that they, too, teem with life, but with life specially adapted to the environment. Life in forms strange and weird; life far stranger to us than Columbus found it to be in the New World when he first landed there. Life, it may be, stranger than ever Dante described or Doré drew. Intelligence may yet have a home among those spheres no less than on the earth. There are globes greater and globes less—atmospheres greater and atmospheres less. And the truest philosophy on this subject is crystallised in the exquisite language of Tennyson:—

> This truth within thy mind rehearse
> That in a boundless universe
> Is boundless better, boundless worse.
> Think you this mould of hopes and fears
> Could find no statelier than his peers
> In yonder hundred million spheres?
>
> —*Sir Robert Ball in "The Story of the Heavens."*

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ON THE SOUL OF MAN*

JACOB BOEHME'S REPLY TO THE SIXTEENTH QUESTION PROPOUNDED TO HIM BY DR. BALTHASAR WALTER, IN A. D. 1620.

To the Sixteenth Question:

How is the soul kept in union, both in the Adamicall and Regenerate Body?

1. We have mentioned before that there are three principles which are all three in the soul, already beforehand, and are in one another as one thing! and you must understand that the strife in the soul beginneth before in the seed, while it lyeth hidden in both sexes; when also the *Turba* stirreth up itself before, in that it driveth the essence of the seed to a false desire and imagination.

2. Although the spirit tameth the body, yet at the same time it imagineth, and that the *Turba* causeth in the seed, and no man can well deny but that many times this imagination is offensive to him, and where there is a right spirit it wisheth it anathematised. And you must know that the spirit of the soul sticketh thus in a miserable strait, and cannot be loosed until the *Turba* taketh the body.

3. Now there is never any union between the outward and the Regenerate man; the outward man would always devour the Regenerate man, for they are in one another; but each hath its own principle, so that the outward cannot overmaster the inward, if the spirit do but continue in strife.

4. They may very well depend on one another, for all three set forth God's works of wonder, if they continue in due order, each keeping its own principle.

5. For the soul hath the government of the fire, and it is the cause of the life of all three; and the spirit hath the government of the light, in which the noble heavenly Image consisteth with the Divine Body; and the outward spirit hath the government of the earthly life, this should seek and manifest the wonders, and the Inward spirit should give it understanding to do that, and the soul should manifest the abyss (viz., the Highest Secret) to the outward spirit.

6. The soul is the Pearl, and the spirit of the soul is the finder of the Pearl, and the earthly spirit is the seeker, the earthly body is the mystery wherein the secret of greatest abstruseness is couched: for the Deity hath manifested itself in the earthliness, viz: in a comprehensible essence; and therefore now three seekers belong thereto.

7. But you must not suppose that we are an enemy to the outward life, for it is most profitable to us, as to the wonders of God; there is nothing more profitable to the whole man than to stand still in his three-fold life, and not go back at all with the outward into the inward, but with the inward into the outward.

8. For the outward is a beast, and belongeth not to the inward, but its wonders which it hath brought forth out of the inward, and which it hath displayed in the comprehensible essence, they

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belong in their figure (not in their essence) to the inward: the inward spirit must receive these (which are God's works of wonder), for they shall be the joy of it forever.

9. And thus we say that the soul may be kept very well in the New Man, if the spirit of its Tincture do but hinder its longing and imagination; and although the outward spirit be Bestial, yet the inward understanding (spirit) is able to keep in and tame the outward, for it is Lord over it. But he that suffereth the Bestial spirit to be Lord, he is a beast, and hath also a bestial image in the inward figure, in the Tincture.

10. And he that letteth the fire spirit, *viz.:* the *Turba,* be Lord, he is an essential devil in the inward image; therefore here it is necessary that the outward spirit pour water into the fire, that it may hold that strong spirit captive, and that seeing it will not be God's image, it may remain a beast in the inward image.

11. Now if we consider ourselves in the union, the outward spirit is very profitable to us, for many souls would perish if the bestial spirit were not present; for it beholdeth the fire spirit captive, and setteth before the fire spirit earthly bestial labor and joy, wherein it may busy itself until it be able by the Wonders in the imagination, to discover somewhat of its noble image that it may seek itself again.

12. My beloved children who are born in God, I tell it you: it was not for nothing that God breathed the outward spirit *(viz.:* the outward Life) into Adam's nostrils, for great danger did attend this Image.

13. God knew how it went with Lucifer, and also what the great Eternal Magic could do; yet Adam might have been a devil, but the outward glass hindered that, for where water is, it quencheth the fire.

14. Also many a soul by its wickedness would become a devil in a moment if the outward life did not hinder it, so that the soul cannot wholly inflame itself.

15. How many are there that are so full of poison and evil that they do murder and commit villany; but this their fire hath water, or else they were past remedy. As ye see in gall which is a fiery poison, but it is mingled with water, and so the violence of the fire is allayed.

16. Thus it is also with the inward essence; the spirit of this world hath wound itself into the abyss of the soul, and in its source hath killing water, wherewith it often bedeweth the soul when it would spit fire.

17. Moreover the outward spirit could not have life without this fire, seeing it hath fire in all creatures, but this fire is only the wrath of the inward fire.

18. The inward fire consumeth earth and stones, also the body and blood, yea, even the noble Image, if it be enflamed in the will; but then the water is a medicine for it, which pulleth down its aspiring force whereby it laboreth to get above the meekness of God as Lucifer did.

THE ROOTS OF RITUALISM IN CHURCH AND MASONRY*

(Continued from the May Number.) 29

VII.

THE ritualism of primitive Christianity—as now sufficiently shown—sprang from ancient Masonry. The latter was, in its turn, the offspring of the, then, almost dead Mysteries. Of these we have now a few words to say.

It is well known that throughout antiquity, besides the popular worship composed of the dead-letter forms and empty exoteric ceremonies, every nation had its *secret* cult known to the world as the MYSTERIES. Strabo, one among many others, warrants for this assertion (*Vide Georg.* lib. 10.) No one received admittance into them save those prepared for it by special training. The neophytes instructed in the upper temples were iniated into the final Mysteries in the crypts. These instructions were the last surviving heirlooms of archaic wisdom, and it is under the guidance of high Initiates that they were *enacted*. We use the word "enacted" purposely; for the *oral* instructions *at low breath* were given only in the crypts, in solemn silence and secrecy. During the public classes and general teachings, the lessons in cosmogony and theogony were delivered in allegorical representation, the *modus operandi* of the gradual evolution of Kosmos, worlds, and finally of our earth, of gods and men, all was imparted in a symbolical way. The great public performances during the festivals of the Mysteries, were witnessed by the masses and the *personified* truths worshipped by the multitudes—*blindly*. Alone the high Initiates, the *Epoptæ*, understood their language and real meaning. All this, and so far, is well known to the world of scholars.

It was a common claim of all the ancient nations that the real mysteries of what is called so unphilosophically, *creation*, were divulged to the elect of our (fifth) race by its first dynasties of *divine* Rulers—gods in flesh, "divine incarnations," or *Avatars*, so called. The last Stanzas, given from the *Book of Dzyan* in the *Secret Doctrine* (Vol. ii., p. 21[1]), speak of those who ruled over the descendants "produced from the holy stock," and . . . "who re-descended, who made peace with the fifth (race) who taught and instructed it."

The phrase "made peace" shows that there had been a previous *quarrel*. The fate of the Atlanteans in our philosophy, and that of the *prediluvians* in the Bible, corroborates the idea. Once more—many centuries before the Ptolemies—the same abuse of the sacred knowledge crept in amongst the initiates of the Sanctuary in

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[1] Original Edition [Ed. Theosophy.]

Egypt. Preserved for countless ages in all their purity, the sacred teachings of the gods, owing to personal ambition and selfishness, became corrupted again. The meaning of the symbols found itself but too often desecrated by unseemly interpretations, and very soon the Eleusinian Mysteries remained the only ones pure from adulteration and sacrilegious innovations. These were in honour of (Ceres) Demeter, or Nature, and were celebrated in Athens, the flowers of the intellect of Asia Minor and Greece being initiated thereinto. In his 4th Book, Zosimus states that these Initiates embraced *the whole of mankind*;* while Aristides calls the Mysteries the *common temple of the earth.*

It is to preserve some reminiscence of this "temple," and to rebuild it, if need be, that certain elect ones among the initiated began to be *set apart.* This was done by their High Hierophants in every century, from the time when the sacred allegories showed the first signs of desecration and decay. For the great *Eleusinia* finally shared the same fate as the others. Their earlier excellency and purpose are described by Clement of Alexandria who shows the greater Mysteries divulging the secrets and the mode of construction of the Universe, this being the beginning, the end and the ultimate goal of human knowledge, for in them was shown to the initiated Nature and all things *as they are.* (Strom. 8.) This is the Pythagorean *Gnosis,* ἡγνῶσις τῶν ὄντων. Epictetus speaks of these instructions in the highest terms: "All that is ordained therein was established by our masters for the instruction of men and the correction of our customs." (*apud Arrian. Dissert.* lib. cap. 21.) Plato asserts in the *Phœdo* the same: the object of the Mysteries was to re-establish the soul in its primordial purity, or *that state of perfection from which it had fallen.*

VIII.

But there came a day when the Mysteries deviated from their purity in the same way as the exoteric religions. This began when the State bethought itself, on the advice of Aristogeiton (510 B. C.), of drawing from the *Eleusinia* a constant and prolific source of income. A law was passed to that effect. Henceforth, no one could be initiated without paying a certain sum of money for the privilege. That boon which could hitherto be acquired only at the price of incessant, almost superhuman effort, toward virtue and excellency, was now to be purchased for so much gold. Laymen—and even priests themselves—while accepting the desecration lost eventually their past reverence for the inner Mysteries, and this led to further profanation of the Sacred Science. The rent made in the veil widened with every century; and more than ever the Supreme Hierophants, dreading the final publication and distortion of the most holy secrets of nature, laboured to eliminate them from the *inner* programme, limiting the full knowledge thereof but to

*Says Cicero in *de Nat. Deorum,* lib. I—"*omitto Eleusinam sanctam illam et augustam; ab initiantur gentes orarum ultima.*"

the few. It is those *set apart* who soon became the only custodians of the divine heirloom of the ages. Seven centuries later, we find Apuleius, his sincere inclination toward magic and the mystical notwithstanding, writing in his *Golden Ass* a bitter satire against the hypocrisy and debauchery of certain orders of *half*-initiated priests. It is through him also, that we learn that in his day (IInd century A. D.) the Mysteries had become so universal that persons of all ranks and conditions, in every country, men, women, and children all were *initiated!* Initiation had become as necessary in his day as baptism has since become with the Christians; and, as the latter is now, so the former had become then—*i. e.*, meaningless, and a purely dead-letter ceremony of mere form. Still later, the fanatics of the new religion laid their heavy hand on the Mysteries.

The *Epoptæ,* they "who see things as they are" disappeared one by one, emigrating into regions inaccessible to the Christians. The *Mystæ* (from *Mystes* "or veiled") "they who see things only as they appear" remained very soon, alone, sole masters of the situation.

It is the former, the "set apart," who have preserved the true secrets; it is the *Mystæ,* those who knew them only superficially, who laid the first foundation stone of modern masonry; and it is from this half pagan, half converted primitive fraternity of Masons that Christian ritualism and most of dogmas were born. Both the *Epoptæ* and the *Mystæ* are entitled to the name of *Masons:* for both carrying out their pledges to, and the injunction of their long departed Hierophants and βασιλεῖς "Kings" *rebuilt,* the Epoptæ, their "lower," and the Mystæ, their "upper" *temples.* For such were the irrespective appellations in antiquity, and are so to this day in certain regions. Sophocles speaks in the *Electra* (Act 2) of the foundations of Athens—the site of the Eleusinian Mysteries—as being the "sacred edifice of the gods," *i. e.*, built by the *gods.* Initiation was spoken of as "walking into the temple," and "cleaning," or *rebuilding the temple* referred to the *body* of an initiate on his last and supreme trial. (*Vide* St. John's Gospel, ii., 19). The esoteric doctrine, also, was sometimes called by the name of "Temple" and popular exoteric religion, by that of "city." To *build a temple* meant to found an esoteric school; to "build a city temple" signified to establish a public cult. Therefore, the true surviving "Masons" of the *lower* Temple, or the *crypt,* the sacred place of initiation, are the only custodians of the true *Masonic* secrets now lost to the world. We yield willingly to the modern Fraternity of Masons the title of "Builders of the *higher* Temple," as the *à priori* superiority of the comparative adjective is as illusionary as the blaze of the burning bush of Moses itself in the Templars' Lodges.

IX.

The misunderstood allegory known as the Descent into *Hades,* has wrought infinite mischief. The exoteric "fable" of Hercules

and Theseus descending *into the infernal regions;* the journey thither of Orpheus, who found his way by the power of his lyre *(Ovid Metam.);* of Krishna, and finally of Christ, who "descended into Hell and the third day rose again from the dead"—was twisted out of recognition by the non-initiated *adapters* of pagan rites and transformers thereof, into Church rites and dogmas.

Astronomically, this *descent into hell* symbolized the Sun during the autumnal equinox when abandoning the higher sidereal regions—there was a supposed fight between him and the Demon of Darkness who got the best of our luminary. Then the Sun was imagined to undergo a *temporary death* and to descend into the infernal regions. But mystically, it typified the initiatory rites in the crypts of the temple, called the Underworld. Bacchus, Herakles, Orpheus, Asklepios and all the other visitors of the crypt, *all descended into hell and ascended thence on the third day,* for all were initiates and "Builders of the lower Temple." The words addressed by Hermes to Prometheus, chained on the arid rocks of the Caucasus—*i. e.* bound by ignorance to his physical body and devoured therefore by the vultures of passion—apply to every neophyte, to every *Chrestos* on trial. "To such labours look thou for no termination until the (or *a*) god shall appear as a substitute in thy pangs and shall be willing to go both to gloomy Hades and to the murky depths around Tartarus." (Æschylus: *Prometheus,* 1027, ff.) They mean simply that until Prometheus (or man) could find the "God," or Hierophant (the Initiator) who would willingly descend into the crypts of initiation, and walk around Tartarus with him, the vulture of passion would never cease to gnaw his vitals.* Æschylus as a pledged Initiate could say no more; but Aristophanes less pious, or more daring, divulges the secret to those who are not blinded by a too strong preconception, in his immortal satire on Heracles' *descent into Hell. (Frogs.)* There we find the chorus of the "blessed ones" (the initiated), the Elysian Fields, the arrival of Bacchus (the god Hierophant) with Herakles, the reception with lighted torches, emblems of *new* LIFE *and* RESURRECTION from the darkness of human ignorance to the light of spiritual knowledge—eternal LIFE. Every word of the brilliant satire shows the inner meaning of the poet:

> "Wake, burning torches . . . for thou comest
> Shaking them in thy hand, Iacche,
> Phosphoric *star of the nightly rite.*"

All such final initiations took place during the night. To speak, therefore, of anyone as having descended into Hades, was equivalent in antiquity to calling him a *full Initiate.* To those

*The dark region in the crypt, into which the candidate under initiation was supposed to throw away for ever his worst passions and lusts. Hence the allegories by Homer, Ovid, Virgil, etc., all accepted literally by the modern scholar. Phlegethon was the river in Tartarus into which the initiate was thrice plunged by the Hierophant, after which the trials were over and the new man *born anew.* He had left in the dark stream the old sinful man for ever, and issued on the third day, from Tartarus, as an *individuality,* the *personality* being dead. Such characters as Ixion, Tantalus, Sisyphus, etc., are each a personification of some human passion.

who feel inclined to reject this explanation, I would offer a query. Let them explain, in that case, the meaning of a sentence in the sixth book of Virgil's *Æneid*. What can the poet mean, if not that which is asserted above, when introducing the aged Anchises in the Elysian fields, he makes him advise Æneas his son, to travel to Italy . . . where he would have to fight in Latium, a rude and barbarous people; therefore, he adds, before you venture there *"Descend into Hades," i. e.* get yourself initiated.

The benevolent clericals, who are so apt to send us on the slightest provocation to Tartarus and the infernal regions, do not suspect what good wishes for us the threat contains; and what a holy character one must be before one gets into such a sanctified place.

It is not pagans alone who had their Mysteries. Bellarmin (*De Eccl. Triumph.* lib. 2, cap. 14) states that the early Christians adopted, after the example of pagan ceremonies, the custom of assembling in the church during the nights preceding their festivals, to hold vigils or "wakes." Their ceremonies were performed at first with the most edifying holiness and purity. But very shortly after that, such immoral abuses crept into these "assemblies" that the bishops found it necessary to abolish them. We have read in dozens of works about the licentiousness in the pagan religious festivals. Cicero is quoted (*de Leg.* lib. 2, cap 15) showing Diagondas, the Theban, finding no other means of remedying such disorders in the ceremonies than the suppression of the Mysteries themselves. When we contrast the two kinds of celebrations, however, the Pagan Mysteries hoary with age centuries before our era, and the Christian *Agapœ* and others in a religion hardly born and claiming such a purifying influence on its converts, we can only pity the mental blindness of its defenders and quote for their benefit Roscommon, who asks:—

> "When you begin with so much pomp and show,
> Why is the end so little and so low?"

X.

Primitive Christianity—being derived from the primitive Masonry—had its grip, pass-words, and degrees of initiation. "Masonry" is an old term but it came into use very late in our era. Paul calls himself a "master-builder" and he was one. The ancient Masons called themselves by various names and most of the Alexandrian Eclectics, the Theosophists of Ammonias Saccas and the later Neo-Platonists, were all virtually Masons. They were all bound by oath to secrecy, considered themselves a Brotherhood, and had also their signs of recognition. The Eclectics or Philaletheians comprised within their ranks the ablest and most learned scholars of the day, as also several crowned heads. Says the author of *The Eclectic Philosophy:*

> "Their doctrines were adopted by pagans and Christians in Asia and Europe, and for a season everything seemed favourable for a general fusion of religious belief. The Emperors Alexander Severus and Julian embraced them.

Their predominating influence upon religious ideas excited the jealousy of the Christians of Alexandria. The school was removed to Athens, and finally closed by the Emperor Justinian. Its professors *withdrew to Persia,** where they made many disciples."

A few more details may prove perchance, interesting. We know that the Eleusinian Mysteries survived all others. While the secret cults of the minor gods such as the *Curates,* the *Dactyli,* the worship of Adonis, of the Kabiri, and even those of old Egypt had entirely disappeared under the revengeful and cruel hand of the pitiless Theodosius,[1] the Mysteries of Eleusis could not be so easily disposed of. They were indeed the religion of mankind, and shone in all their ancient splendour if not in their primitive purity. It took several centuries to abolish them, and they could not be entirely suppressed before the year 396 of our era. It is then that the "Builders of the *higher,* or City Temple" appeared first on the scene and worked unrelentingly to infuse their rituals and peculiar dogmas into the nascent and ever fighting and quarrelling church. The triple *Sanctus* of the Roman Catholic Mass is the triple S.·.S.·.S.·. of these early Masons, and is the modern prefix to their documents or "any written *balustre*—the initial of *Salutem,* or Health" as cunningly put by a Mason. "This triple masonic salutation is the most ancient among their greetings" *(Ragon.)*

XI.

But they did not limit their grafts on the tree of the Christian religion to this alone. During the Mysteries of Eleusis, wine represented Bacchus and Ceres—wine and bread, or corn.[2] Now Ceres or Demeter was the female *productive principle* of the Earth; the spouse of Father Æther, or Zeus; and Bacchus, the son of Zeus-Jupiter, was his father manifested: in other words, Ceres and Bacchus were the personifications of Substance and Spirit, the two vivifying principles in Nature and on Earth. The hierophant Initiator presented symbolically, before the final *revelation* of the mysteries, wine and bread to the candidate, who ate and drank, in token that the spirit was to quicken matter: *i. e.* the divine wisdom of the Higher-Self was to enter into and take possession of his inner Self or Soul through what was to be revealed to him.

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*And we may add, beyond, to India and Central Asia, for we find their influence everywhere in Asiatic countries.

[1] The murderer of the Thessalonians, who were butchered by this pious son of the Church.

[2] Bacchus is certainly of Indian origin. Pausanias shows him the first to lead an expedition against India, and the first to throw a bridge over the Euphrates. "The cable which served to unite the two opposite shores being exhibited to this day," writes this historian, "it being woven from vine-branches and trailings of ivy." (X. 29. 4.) Arrianus and Quintus-Curtius explained the allegory of Bacchus' birth from the thigh of Zeus, by saying that he was born on the Indian Mount *Meru* (from μηρός thigh). We are aware that Eratosthenes and Strabo believed the Indian Bacchus had been invented by flatterers to simply please Alexander, believed to have conquered India as Bacchus is supposed to have done. But on the other hand Cicero mentions the god as a Son of Thyoné and Nisus; and Dionysus or Διόνυσος means the god Dis from Mount Nys in India. Bacchus crowned with ivy, or *Kissos* is Krishna, one of whose names was *Kissen.* Dionysus was pre-eminently the god who was expected to liberate the *souls of men* from their prisons of flesh—Hades and the human Tartarus, in one of its symbolical senses. Cicero calls Orpheus a son of Bacchus; and there is a tradition which not only makes Orpheus come from India (he being called ὀρφός dark, of tawny complexion) but identifies him with Arjuna, the *chela* and adoptive son of Krishna. (*Vide* "Five Years of Theosophy." Art: *Was writing known before Panini*).

This rite was adopted by the Christian Church. The Hierophant who was called the "Father," has now passed, part and parcel—*minus* knowledge—into the "Father" priest, who to-day administers the same communion. Jesus calls himself a vine and *his* "Father" the husbandman; and his injunction at the Last Supper shows his thorough knowledge of the symbolical meaning (*Vide infra,* note) of bread and wine, and his identification with the *logoi* of the ancients. "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life." "This *is* a hard saying," he adds. . . . "The words (*rhemata*, or arcane utterances) that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life." They are; because "it is the Spirit that quickeneth." Furthermore these *rhemata* of Jesus are indeed the arcane utterances *of an Initiate.*

But between this noble rite, as old as symbolism, and its later anthropomorphic interpretation, now known as *transubstantiation,* there is an abyss of ecclesiastical sophistry. With what force the exclamation—"Woe unto you lawyers. For *ye have taken away the key of knowledge,"* (and will not permit even now *gnosis* to be given to others;) with what tenfold force, I say, it applies more now than then. Aye; that *gnosis,* "ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were (and are) entering ye prevented," and still prevent. Nor has the modern priesthood alone laid itself open to this blame. Masons, the descendants, or at any rate the successors, of the "Builders of the upper Temple" during the Mysteries, they who ought to know better, will pooh-pooh and scorn any one among their own brethren who will remind them of their true origin. Several great modern Scholars and Kabalists, who are Masons, and could be named, received worse than the cold shoulder from their Brethren. It is ever the same old, old story. Even Ragon, the most learned in his day among all the Masons of our century, complains of it, in these words:—

"All the ancient narratives attest that the initiations in the days of old had an imposing ceremonial, and became memorable for ever through the grand truths divulged and the knowledge that resulted therefrom. And yet there are *some modern Masons, of half-learning,* who hasten to treat as charlatans all those who successfully remind of, and explain to them these ancient ceremonies!" (*Cours. Philos.* p. 87 note (2).)

XII.

Vanitas vanitatum! nothing is new under the sun. The "Litanies of the Virgin Mary" prove it in the sincerest way. Pope Gregory I. introduces the *worship* of the Virgin Mary and the Chalcedonian Council proclaim her the mother of God. But the author of the *Litanies* had not even the decency (or is it the brains?) to furnish her with any other than pagan adjectives and titles, as I shall presently show. Not a symbol, not a metaphor of this famous Litany but belonged to a crowd of goddesses; all Queens, Virgins, or Mothers; these three titles applying to Isis, Rhea, Cybele, Diana, Lucifera, Lucina, Luna, Tellus, Latona *triformis,* Proserpina, Hecate, Juno, Vesta, Ceres, Leucothea, Astarte, *celestial* Venus and Urania, *Alma Venus,* etc., etc., etc.

Besides the primitive signification of trinity (the *esoteric,* or that of Father, Mother, Son) does not this Western *trimurti* (three faces) mean in the masonic pantheon *"Sun, Moon,* and the *Venerable"?* a slight alteration, forsooth, from the Germanic and Northern *Fire, Sun* and *Moon.*

It is the intimate knowledge of this, perchance, that made the Mason, J. M. Ragon describe his profession of faith thus:

> "For me *the Son is the same as Horus, son of Osiris and Isis;* he is the SUN who, *every year redeems the world from sterility* and *the universal death of the races."*

And he goes on to speak of the Virgin Mary's particular litanies, temples, festivals, masses and Church services, pilgrimages, oratories, Jacobins, Franciscans, vestals, prodigies, *ex voto,* niches, statues, etc., etc., etc.

De Maleville, a great Hebrew scholar and translator of Rabbinical literature, observes that the Jews give to the moon all those names which, in the *Litanies,* are used to glorify the Virgin. He finds in the *Litanies of Jesus* all the attributes of Osiris—the Eternal Sun, and of Horus, the Annual Sun.

And he proves it.

Mater Christi is the mother of the Redeemer of the old Masons, who is the *Sun.* The *hoi polloi* among the Egyptians, claimed that the child, symbol of the great central star, *Horus,* was the Son of *Osireth* and *Oseth,* whose souls had *ensouled,* after their death, the *Sun* and the *Moon. Isis* became, with the Phœnicians, *Astarte,* the names under which they adored the Moon, personified as a woman adorned with horns, which symbolised the crescent. Astarte was represented at the autumnal equinox after her husband (the Sun's) defeat by the Prince of Darkness, and descent into Hades, as weeping over the loss of her consort, who is also her son, as Isis does that of her consort, brother and son (Osiris-Horus). Astarte holds in her hand a cruciform stick, a regular cross, and stands weeping on the crescent moon. The Christian Virgin Mary is often represented in the same way, standing on the new moon, surrounded by stars and weeping for her son *juxta crucem lacrymosa dum pendebat filius (Vide Stabat Mater Dolorosa).* Is not she the heiress of Isis and Astarte? asks the author.

Truly, and you have but to repeat the *Litany to the Virgin* of the R. Catholic Church, to find yourself repeating ancient incantations to *Adonaïa* (Venus), the mother of Adonis, the Solar god of so many nations; to *Mylitta* (the Assyrian Venus), goddess of nature; to *Alilat,* whom the Arabs symbolized by the two lunar horns; to *Selene,* wife and sister of *Helion,* the Sun god of the Greeks; or, to the *Magna Mater, . . . honestissima, purissima, castissima,* the Universal Mother of all Beings—because SHE IS MOTHER NATURE.

Verily is *Maria* (Mary) the Isis *Myrionymos,* the Goddess Mother of the ten thousand names! As the Sun was *Phœbus,* in heaven, so he became *Apollo,* on earth, and Pluto in the still lower

regions (after sunset); so the moon was *Phœbe* in heaven, and *Diana* on earth *(Gœa, Latona, Ceres)*; becoming *Hecate* and *Proserpine* in Hades. Where is the wonder then, if Mary is called *regina virginum,* "Queen of Virgins," and *castissima* (most chaste), when even the prayers offered to her at the sixth hour of the morning and the evening are copied from those sung by the "heathen" Gentiles *at the same hours* in honour of *Phœbe* and *Hecate?* The verse of the "Litany to the Virgin," *stella matutina,** we are informed, is a faithful copy of a verse from the litany of the *triformis* of the pagans. It is at the Council which condemned Nestorius that Mary was first titled as the "Mother of God," *mater dei.*

In our next, we shall have something to say about this famous Litany of the Virgin, and show its origin in full. We shall cull our proofs, as we go along, from the classics and the moderns, and supplement the whole from the *annals* of religions as found in the Esoteric Doctrine. Meanwhile, we may add a few more statements and give the etymology of the most sacred terms in ecclesiastical ritualism.

XIII.

Let us give a few moments of attention to the assemblies of the "Builders of the upper Temple" in early Christianity. Ragon has shown plainly to us the origin of the following terms:—

(a.) "The word 'mass,' comes from the Latin *Messis*—'harvest,' whence the noun *Messias,* 'he who ripens the harvest,' Christ, the Sun."

(b.) The word "Lodge" used by the Masons, the feeble successors of the Initiates, has its root in *loga,* (*loka,* in Sanskrit) a locality and a *world;* and in the Greek *logos,* the Word, a discourse; signifying in its full meaning "a place where certain things are discussed."

(c.) These assemblies of the *logos* of the primitive *initiated* masons came to be called *synaxis,* "gatherings" of the Brethren for the purpose of praying and celebrating the *cœna* (supper) wherein only bloodless offerings, fruit and cereals, were used. Soon after these offerings began to be called *hostiæ* or sacred and pure *hosties,* in contrast to the impure sacrifices (as of prisoners of war, *hostes,* whence the word *hostage*). As the offerings consisted of the harvest fruits, the first fruits of *messis,* thence the word "mass." Since no father of the Church mentions, as some scholars would have it, that the word *mass* comes from the Hebrew *missah* (*oblatum,* offering) one explanation is as good as the other. For an exhaustive enquiry on the word *missa* and *mizda,* see King's *gnostics,* pp. 124, *et seq.*

Now the word *synaxis* was also called by the Greeks *agyrmos,* ἀγυρμὸς (a collection of men, assembly). It referred to initiation

*The "Morning Star," or *Lucifer,* the name which Jesus calls himself by in Rev. xxii, 16, and which becomes, nevertheless, the *name of the Devil,* as soon as a theosophical journal assumes it!

into the Mysteries. Both words—*synaxis* and *agyrmos**—became obsolete with the Christians, and the word *missa,* or mass, prevailed and remained. Theologians will have it, desirous as they are to veil its etymology, that the term messias *(Messiah)* is derived from the Latin word *missus* (messenger, *the sent*). But if so, then again it may be applied as well to the Sun, the *annual messenger,* sent to bring light and new life to the earth and its products. The Hebrew word for Messiah *mâshiah* (anointed, from *mashah,* to anoint) will hardly apply to, or bear out the identity in the ecclesiastical sense; nor will the Latin *missa* (mass) derive well from that other Latin word *mittere, missum,* "to send," or "dismiss." Because the communion service—its heart and soul—is based on the consecration and oblation of the host or *hostia* (sacrifice), a wafer (a thin, leaf-like bread) representing the body of Christ in the Eucharist, and that such wafer of flour is a direct development of the harvest or cereal offerings. Again, the primitive *masses* were *cœnas* (late dinners or suppers), which, from the simple meals of Romans, who "washed, were *anointed,* and wore a *cenatory* garment" at dinner, became consecrated meals in memory of the last Supper of Christ.

The converted Jews in the days of the Apostles met at their *synaxes,* to read the Evangels and their correspondence (Epistles). St. Justin (150 A. D.) tells us that these solemn assemblies were held on the day called *Sun* (Sunday, *dies magnus*), on which days there were psalms chanted "collation of baptism with pure water and the *agapæ* of the holy *cœna* with bread and wine." What has this hybrid combination of pagan Roman dinners, raised by the inventors of church dogmas to a sacred mystery, to do with the Hebrew *Messiah* "he who causes to go down into the pit" (or Hades), or its Greek transliteration *Messias?* As shown by Nork, Jesus *"was never anointed either as high priest or king,"* therefore his name of *Messias* cannot be derived from its present Hebrew equivalent. The less so, since the word anointed, or "rubbed with oil" a *Homeric term,* is *chris,* χρίς and *chrio,* χρίω, both *to anoint the body with oil.* (See Lucifer for 1887, "The Esoteric Meaning of the Gospels.")

Another high Mason, the author of "The Source of Measures," summarizes this *imbroglio* of the ages in a few lines by saying:—

"The fact is there were *two Messiahs*: *One,* as causing himself to go down into the pit, for the salvation of the world;[1] this was the sun shorn of his *golden rays* and *crowned with blackened ones* (symbolizing this loss) as the thorns. *The other,* was the triumphant *Messiah,* mounted up to this *sum-*

*Hesychius gives the name (agyrmos) to the first day of the initiation into the mysteries of Ceres, goddess of harvest, and refers to it also under that of *Synaxis.* The early Christians called their mass, before this term was adopted, and the celebration of their mysteries—*Synaxis,* a word compounded from *sun* "with," and *ago* "I lead," whence, the Greek synaxis or an *assembly.*

[1] From times immemorial every initiate before entering on his supreme trial of initiaton, in antiquity as at the present time, pronounces these sacramental words. . . . "And I swear to give up my life for the salvation of my brothers, which constitute the whole mankind, if called upon, and to die in the defence of truth. . . . ."

mit of the arch of Heaven, personated as the *Lion of the tribe of Judah.* In both instances he had the cross. . . ."

At the *Ambarvales,* the festivals in honour of Ceres, the *Arval* (the assistant of the High Priest) clad in pure white, placing on the *hostia* (sacrificial heap) a cake of corn, water and wine, tasted the wine of *libation* and gave to all others to *taste.* The *oblation* (or offering) was then taken up by the High Priest. It symbolized the three kingdoms of Nature—the cake of corn (vegetable kinddom), the sacrificial vase or *chalice* (mineral), and the *pall* (the scarf-like garment) of the Hierophant, an end of which he threw over the oblation wine cup. This pall was made of pure white lamb-skins.

The modern priest repeats, gesture for gesture, the acts of the pagan priest. He lifts up and offers the bread to be consecrated; blesses the water that is to be put in the chalice, and then pours the wine into it, incenses the altar, etc., etc., and going to the altar washes his fingers saying, "I will wash my hands *among the* INNOCENT and encompass thy altar, O Lord." He does so, because the ancient and *pagan* priest did the same, saying, "I wash (with lustral water) my hands among the INNOCENT (the fully initiated Brethren) and encompass thy altar, O great Goddess" (Ceres). Thrice went the high priest round the altar loaded with offerings, carrying high above his head the chalice covered with the end of his snow-white lamb-skin. . . .

The consecrated vestment worn by the Pope, the *pall, "has the form of a scarf made of white wool,* embroidered with purple crosses." In the Greek Church, the priest covers, with the end of the pall thrown over his shoulder, the chalice.

The High Priest of antiquity repeated thrice during the divine services his *"O redemptor mundi"* to Apollo 'the Sun' his *mater Salvatoris,* to Ceres, the earth, his *Virgo paritura* to the Virgin Goddess, etc., and pronounced *seven ternary commemorations.* (Hearken, O Masons!)

The ternary number, so reverenced in antiquity, is as reverenced now, and is pronounced five times during the mass. We have three *introibo,* three *Kyrie eleison,* three *mea culpa,* three *agnus dei,* three *Dominus Vobiscum.* A true masonic series! Let us add to this the three *et cum spiritu tuo,* and the Christian mass yields to us the same *seven triple commemorations.*

PAGANISM, MASONRY, and THEOLOGY—such is the historical trinity now ruling the world *sub rosa.* Shall we close with a Masonic greeting and say:—

Illustrious officers of Hiram Abif, Initiates, and "Widow's sons." The Kingdom of Darkness and ignorance is fast dispelling, but there are regions still untouched by the hand of the scholar, and as black as the night of Egypt. *Fratres, sobrii estote et vigilate!*

H. P. B.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONERS*

From M. X. D.

What is the right pronunciation of the word OM found at the beginning and end of THE PATH, and which is the first letter of the Sanscrit alphabet and the Hindu sacred word?

Answer.—We have not spelled the word right in either instance. In order to give the sound as the Hindus make it, it is necessary to spell it OHM so as to represent the very long sound of "O." We have not used that mode because it is associated with electrical science as the measure of the power of the current.

From E. A. K.

We are told that Spirit—a portion of the Absolute—becomes embodied in matter. Passing through numberless gradations in the ascending scale of being, it eventually returns whence it came and is absorbed in the Infinite. Now does it return exactly as it left the Infinite? If so, what is the use of the terrible ordeal and almost interminable experiences that it has undergone? * * * If it is said that the Spirit returns to the Absolute enriched and improved, then we have to admit that the Infinite can be improved and added to, and such a conclusion is impossible.

Answer.—If the premises were right the conclusion would be also; but the first proposition is incorrect, and I have never heard that "we are told" any thing of the kind. The spirit does not "become embodied in matter" except in the case of a perfected man or a Mahatma. During our pilgrimage the spirit is *connected* with matter, and it is for us to win recognition or to lose the Spirit. Nor does it pass "through numberless gradations in the ascending scale of being." It is ever perfect, and has no ascension or declension.

The confusion has arisen because of the confused use of the term "spirit" I should like to have pointed out by the questioner in what book I may find it stated that the spirit becomes embodied in matter, &c. It is the same sort of confusion introduced by the use of the word "jiva" in Mr. Sinnett's books. This is the same word as is used to refer to what the present questioner calls spirit.

We are all said to be "jivas" on our way to the eternal and absolute reality, and we are also called "jivatma"—or soul spirit—, and then again the jiva is also the mere life-principle in the body. But we may use English and say that the SPIRIT is not embodied and does not pass through matter in the way the question has it, but that at all times it knows all things and is the witness only of all these struggles spoken of; and it is necessary to get some grasp of the idea that all this material world is an illusion, and all the sufferings and interminable experiences are also illusions, and the long periods of time are seemingly long because we ourselves make

* A portion of the correspondence first printed under this title by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for November, 1888.

them so. We would also advise a careful study of Patanjali's Yoga Philosophy.

But, after all, these questions are the same as that one asked of Buddha as to the first cause and why is all this universe here; to which he would make no reply.

KARMA.

A. C. R. asks if a long definition of Karma given in the letter is in harmony with the Asiatic definition.

Answer.—We do not think that the definition of A. C. R. is good, for the reason that it is not clear what is meant. One thing is certain, and that is that Karma is the governor of all our circumstances, and is also in part a cause of acts, and is again the act and the circumstance also. The Universe itself is the Karma of the Supreme. Karma means work or action, and, as action is performed in more ways than by the bodily organs, the field of Karma must not be limited to the body. As A. C. R. says, the most important thing to consider is how we think and what is the motive with which we do any act.

On the subject of Karma the sect of Visishtadwaitas of India say:

"Karma is the cause of connection of Jivatma—or the particular spirit—with matter in the shape of Karanasarira, as well as the cause of misery or happiness. Karma is the producing cause of birth, death, rebirth, and every kind of body. Karma is the result of the conscious action of Jivatma, whether good or bad. Good Karma is that which results in pleasing, and bad Karma is that which results in displeasing, Ishwara, [He is held to be the particular spirit in each body—our Higher-Self]. The action of Jiva produces Karma through ignorance, and this ignorance is of two sorts: one the confounding of the attributes of one thing with those of another; and the second the confounding of one thing with another. Thus, the Jivatma first confounds the body with itself, and then such attributes as birth, death, and so on, with the attributes which really belong to Jivatma only; then certain actions are done, and they lead to other Karma composed of ignorance and of habit. Thus Karma works without any definite beginning, and the causes of Karma mentioned above remain latent during a pralaya or night of Brahma, and when a new evolution begins they again become active and produce results as before."

Karma even works in Swarga or heaven, for, as soon as the causes that take us there are exhausted, we are brought back to rebirth under the operation of Karma; thus it is seen to be stronger than the blissful state of Heaven. This going to and returning from Swarga goes on until salvation is obtained,—one who attains that state is called Jivanmukta. This condition is defined as "an entire separation of Jiva from all connection with matter, and complete destruction of Karma, whether good or bad." The word *Moksha* literally means "release from bondage."

NARAYAN NILAKANT.

ON THE LOOKOUT

We are hearing comparatively little today of "atrocities" in connection with the great war in Europe. Atrocities are still occurring, doubtless; but the long continued struggle seems to have hardened the sensibilities of the combatants, and that which was so terrible and unnatural in the war's early days seems now to be taken more or less as a matter of course. We in America may perhaps wonder that human feelings can become so atrophied and deadened by repeated outrage. But self examination will reveal our hypocrisy. What we really miss is the daily morning thrill, with the newspaper as conductor, at the breakfast table. As for atrocities, America is full of the atrocities of peace, if we can call present conditions a state of peace—lawful stealings, legalized murders, tortures of women and children, vivisection, and what not. Before us as we write, for instance, is a newspaper clipping detailing the methods of a case of human vivisection; and this "atrocity" is said to have been performed by a Professor in one of our great Universities, where the "humanities" are supposed to be taught, the University of Michigan, a state institution, the rallying point (or should be at least) of all the highest and noblest ideals of one of *our* United States. This Professor has been taking samples, it is said, of the brains of helpless and hopeless insane patients of the Michigan Asylum for the insane at Pontiac. One apologist for the Doctor states that the operation is "exceedingly simple" and goes on to describe it in these words:—

> "The patients were hopelessly insane and it was only a question of time when they would die from the paresis which had softened their brains. In the experiments of Dr. Wile, while making a great contribution to science in that they showed plainly the cause of paresis, the patients were not inconvenienced in any way by the operation, which was absolutely painless.
>
> "The method of puncture is as follows: The patient's head is first shaved and the anterior portion of the skull thoroughly painted with tincture of iodine.
>
> "The region is frozen with ethyl chloride and a revolving dental drill is thrust quickly through the skin and deeper tissues. A few rapid revolutions of the drill in the hands of an assistant sufficed to pierce the skull.
>
> "The drill is removed and a long, thin needle is inserted; this is pushed firmly and deeply into the cortex. A syringe barrel is attached to the end of the needle. By suction a small cylinder of brain substance containing both gray and white matter is drawn into the syringe, together with more or less fluid from the ventricle.
>
> "The operation is extremely simple. In all cases thus far examined practically no pain has been experienced."

"Extremely simple," indeed! "A great contribution to science" is undoubtedly on the way! And such atrocities upon those poor unfortunates who cannot help themselves is permitted in a "progressive" country, where "freedom" rules, a country founded that the *rights of man* might be preserved! Could there be presented anywhere a clearer illustration of the inversion of civilization than this?

Now, is a *man* ever really insane in fact? And what is the state of those whom we call "insane"? The *man* is the Ego, the Soul in the life powers. *He* is not, can never be insane—but his body may. It is as if one were a great musician, trying to play an instrument with broken strings. The "insane" are those unfortunates who have knowledge and power, just as we all

have, but whose instruments, bodies and brains, are out of control and defective. The Ego, the Real Man, imprisoned in that faulty instrument, sees and knows and feels as we "sane" ones do—but cannot express himself correctly, or perhaps receive correct impressions. Fancy those tortured ones, seeing and knowing what was going on, quite unable to prevent it, but conscious of the outrage, the indignity, the awful insult to the Soul!

Can Science be really served by such human vivisection, or any vivisection? No, Science cannot. Science means *knowledge,* and no worthy knowledge can ever flow from practices like these. This incident may serve Science, in rousing *real* Scientists to action and impelling them to put an end to such works; or an indignant and outraged public may demand such action as will prevent the possibility of their recurrence. No, vivisection is not Science, has no place in Science. How may one learn of Nature? What says *The Voice of the Silence:*—

"Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance.

"And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom. Unsullied by the hand of Matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit—the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms.

"Then will she show thee the means and the way, . . ."

Accounts of precocious children are often given in our American newspapers and magazines. When any explanation is vouchsafed for the youngster's cleverness it is always something other than reincarnation, the only explanation that will really fit the facts. From San Francisco comes the story of a four year old boy who—

> ". . . . . can read, write, spell, tell the capital of every State in the Union, name each of the fifty-eight counties in California and their capitals, play a piano, discuss Abraham Lincoln and the 'Merchant of Venice,' ride a pony and do a lot of other things that most little boys of his age can't. According to his teachers—he has been trained under a system since 2½ years old—Philip is 'perfectly natural and sane.'
>
> "Philip has never overeaten nor has he had many toys. He learned history through nursery rhymes, and his music he is learning by singing historic songs in jingle.
>
> "His teachers say that Philip began his education too late—that it should have begun at 6 months. He began with ten minutes study a day, but now applies himself daily two and one-half hours. His play is his work.
>
> "Philip exhibited his intellectual prowess at a recital. He spelled approval, operation, explored, playing, useful, confuse, operate, group and domestic right off, but missed on courage, meekness and acquired."

Poor little Philip! Here is an "old soul" come back into a body again, whose karma gives him no opportunity to develop of himself. He must at once conform to the little suit of ideas which his "teachers" have patterned for him; have his tender brain rammed full of the facts of our common unwisdom. And his "teachers" *regret* that he did not come under their system at six months! In fact he is lucky to have escaped, by that much at least, from the moulds that *Kali Yuga* has cast for its own.

Now, how much more "precocious," in a true sense, would Philip have been, if permitted to develop of himself? Immensely more. The real function of education is to "draw out" and not to "ram in." Oh Theosophists, give your children a chance! Each represents an *Ego,* taking a body and

gradually attuning its brain to its own nature and own uses. You can direct, but you must not *interfere*. Not until the child is seven years old is it responsible, is *Manas* fully seated. Formal education should not begin until the age of nine or ten years is reached. The work before that is to *direct* the child, or rather, to help the child adjust itself to the facts of physical life. The relation between parent and child should be like that between *Guru* and *Chela* in many respects—no urging, no pushing, no pulling; but an attempt to "lead out" the *Ego*, to aid it to manifest its nature through body and brain. Let it show itself and you will then know how to proceed.

Galsworthy's "Justice," one of the most vital plays of the day, is being presented for the first time in this country at the Candler Theatre in New York. The play was produced in London five or six years ago and was received with considerable acclaim by the critics. In this country it has been available only in published form until now. Galsworthy is essentially a dramatist and does not deserve the fate of those who put non-dramatic material into a form which has been enjoying a vogue in the seclusion of the library. As plays written for the reading public are never vital or important as plays, our drama has been on the verge of descending to that most unhappy anomaly, the "closet" type. The irreproachable production of "Justice" that is being put on in New York is encouraging as it seems to indicate the return of at least a portion of the thinking public to the contemplation of serious drama, at the playhouse.

Galsworthy is ever too much the artist to gum his moral onto the play, and many are those, who, after being harrowed by his melancholy plots, say: "Oh yes it is very true to life, and very well written, but what does he want us to do about it? There is no solution." We sentimentalize a little, give ourselves a shake to rid ourselves of the uncomfortable feeling left by the people who have for the time made their troubles ours, and then settle back into the rut of not being our brother's keeper.

Galsworthy never preaches brotherhood more strongly than in "Justice." The necessity for brotherhood is not plead in long, strong speeches; but the whole play aches with the misery of humanity without brotherhood. In "Justice" there is not a brutal nor a vicious character; they are all "good" average people. At our worst we might all imagine ourselves sinking to the level of Falder, the lawyer's clerk, who raised a check in order to try to make life tolerable for the woman he loved and her children. After all, would we be at our worst? At our best are we likely to show more self-immolation than Cokeson? Poor old Robert Cokeson had just the same muddling, kind intentions that we all have, when we try to help someone in deep trouble who a little bit shocks our sense of propriety. All through the play we are torn by the spectacle of well-intentioned people driving a man to ruin by allowing their discrimination to be be-fogged by their slavishness to the opinions of conventional society. "Duty to society" sends a man with the potentialities of a hero to prison. Strict conformity to the laws of that prison enforce solitary confinement, against the better judgment of the kindly Governor and Chaplain. A purely (or as Oscar Wilde would say impurely), conventional morality, separating him from the redeeming passion of his life, precipitates the final tragedy.

In "Justice," forgery and adultery are not condoned any more than murder is in Macbeth. We are only shown very forcibly to what straits a man may be driven in a world where each man's hand is raised against his neighbors; and where fear of criticism prevents natural kindness of heart from exercising its sway over the tide of events. The play is timely, now that the question of prison reform is in the foreground in New York.

In "The Pigeon" we have a picture of a sentimentalist whose idea of brotherhood is limited to a physical basis. The kindly gentleman takes all the "rotters" of the East end of London under his misguided wings, with amusing and distressing results.

War is the theme of "The Mob," the war of aggression, when a big country attacks a little one. It is not founded on the facts of a particular war, but is a quite probable situation. Galsworthy pictures in a masterly way the horror of the war-lust of the shouting mob, the men who stop at home and wave flags and break windows. More, the principal character gives up all that he holds valuable in life—position, friends, wife, child, and then life itself, in the defense of his ideal for his country, which is the ideal of brotherhood.

Theosophy is the key to the "solution" that we demand of our writers who are presenting us these problems. Will we ever turn our gaze inward? Will we ever realize that each one of us is responsible for the desperate condition of humanity?

It is said of Galsworthy that he need find no more names for his plays, but had best just number them under the heading, "General Cussedness of Things, No. ——." Surely writers with the power to distress us, in our present selfish condition of mind, as does John Galsworthy and others of his ilk over the troubles of others, have this virtue—that they make us think, they make us wish we could help. And are we not told that we cannot have a sincere desire to help the world without having the opportunity? Is not the great opportunity the contact with Theosophy? Is not the very pessimism in the writings of the day a certain indication of a divine discontent? Will not the mournful persistency in depicting the sorrows of our life as lived, drive us at length to a realization of the beauty of unity? Will it not help to shake us from a selfish lethargy, to a contemplation of the basic facts of life as set forth by the Masters; to a recognition of the fact that the solution is within?

"The Lookout" has received for review, by courtesy of The Path Publishing Co., London, a copy of D. N. Dunlop's *"The Path of Attainment"*—which is made up of three lectures originally delivered extemporaneously before a London Lodge of Theosophists. Mr. Dunlop is apparently a thorough and reverent student of H. P. Blavatsky, and well-ordered as his discourse is, the value of the book lies chiefly in the fact that he has put it before us only to call attention to the source of it, Madame Blavatsky's works. It is refreshing in these ever-increasing days of sly plagiarism from the "Secret Doctrine" to find one student gifted with so rare an intellectual honesty as to acknowledge that his work is only a re-ordering, a selection of matter which to him seems important, out of the great mass of instruction at his disposal. It naturally follows, also, that unlike the work of most students, the book is free from pretense of occult power and astral vagaries. And to think of one besides H. P. B. so daring as to suspect that vegetarianism is not a *sine qua non* of true attainment! But we are inclined to suspect the very strong influence of Wm. Q. Judge—most apparent in the second letter of the series, much of which is in his same simple spirit—a suspicion, which the reader may verify in one place, at least, by turning to Letter VIII, Vol. I, *"Letters That Have Helped Me."* It is a far step for some to recognize Wm. Q. Judge as the one and only colleague of H. P. Blavatsky, but the "real things" will surely come from those who take that step. So we would add that the book *should* acknowledge indebtedness to the writings of W. Q. J., who was the teacher for the west of that true occultism, which, first of all, applies in daily life.

We are always happy to recognize the merit in any student's work, but it must be remembered that it is the declared purpose of The United Lodge of Theosophists to *recommend* only the work of Madame Blavatsky, who was the messenger of Theosophy to the western world, and of Mr. Judge, who is always found to be in complete accord with her. The works of these two, and the writings which they particularly commended, will be found to constitute a complete Theosophical library.